

BLACK LINES



May 1999, Vol. 4, No. 4 Free/\$2 outside Chicago EXPRESSIONS FROM BLACK GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDERED LIFE

the women's issue

*this issue of
blacklines
features
special
contributions
by black
lesbians*

ALSO INSIDE: Unity Conference

Published by Lambda Publications, publishers of
OUTLINES, NIGHTLINES, EN LA VIDA, OUT! GUIDE,
CLOUT! AND TASTE

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cover art by juarez hawkins



HARAMBEE WELLNESS CENTER

of Howard Brown Health Center

Programs and Services for Same Gender Loving Men and Women of African Descent

Brothers CAN (Community Awareness Network)

GAMBA: A discussion group for African-American gay and bisexual men. Meets the second and fourth Wednesday of every month.

Brothers United Together: An ongoing group for HIV positive same gender loving men of African descent.

Brothers CAN Basic and Beyond: A series of workshops that cover topics ranging from HIV 101, intimacy for couples, prevention for young same gender loving men and more.

HIV Prevention Case Management: BROTHERS CAN offers one on one counseling for same gender loving men to help them change behavior that may put them at risk for exposure to HIV.

For BROTHERS CAN programs contact Charles Nelson or Dwayne Sanders.

Well Women's Group • Begins Friday, May 21

A four-week health education workshop for women interested in learning about health issues that affect their lives, including HIV/AIDS, breast and cervical cancer, menstruation, menopause, sexually transmitted diseases and safer sex. For information, call Brie Dean 773.388.8686.

Anonymous HIV Counseling and Testing

If you have had unsafe sex or shared needles, you should consider getting an anonymous HIV test. Sliding-fee scale available, costs range from \$0-60. Results are available in 3-5 Days. Call for an appointment.

Visit the new Harambee Wellness Center in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood at 1515 E. 52nd Place (Adjacent to Harper Court).

For information call 773.752.7867

BLACK LINES

May 1999
Volume 4, Number 4

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Features

WOMEN'S ISSUE
includes poetry, essays,
art, prose ...
Pages 18-24,
plus page 35

look for our Men's Issue
in July ...
deadline is June 10.

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BLACKlines

is on the World Wide Web:
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WASHINGTON BLADE.

BLACKlines

DEADLINE is the 5th of
each month for articles,
calendar, photos, art,
poetry, viewpoints, etc.

Material used on a
space-available basis.



TOP: E. Lynn Harris (pictured) and April Sinclair are among authors in town this month to sign their new books. See pages 8-9. BELOW: Vernita, Kim (now a New Yorker), Renae and Cheryl at the Unity V gala dinner by Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays. See pages 14-17 for more coverage of Unity weekend. Photo by Tracy Baim



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Editorial

by LaJaunessee Jordan

Welcome to our first special women's issue of BLACKLINES. We have many pieces by and focusing on womyn, although our regular contributors are still included (look for the men's issues in July).

Take special notice of the artwork by Juarez Hawkins, including the cover. We have several pieces of womyn's poetry, a femme article by CC. Carter shown in a different way and plenty of womon talk. *Hope you enjoy!*

Now that we are coming to the end of this decade, I would like to share with you whom I would choose as Woman of the Decade. I met her 10 years ago and have witnessed as well as heard from others about the greatness of Jackie Anderson. If you don't know her she is no-nonsense and fun-loving, tough and tender.

She stops bullshit before it fully exits someone's mouth and can win any argument point by point.



I met Jackie when I was editor of another paper and interviewed her about a gay-related story. I really chose to interview her because I was still a lesbian in training and she was queen of the super butches. Although I have known all of my life that I was a lesbian, I had only been a practicing lesbian for ten years—not nearly long enough to get it right. With guidance and example, Jackie has helped me become the perfect lesbian. She told me about this group of womyn who wanted to provide free care to lesbian and non-lesbian womyn with and without cancer. She said they needed me. She and I were a part of the Lesbian Community Cancer Project before there was a board. And we are both retiring this year—seven years later—due to mandatory guidelines. When she developed cancer and had surgery, she did not miss a board meeting.

Jackie was the founder of Yahimba (there is no place like home). She helped grace my home where we used to meet with about 100 Black lesbians. Yahimba brought the Chicago Black lesbian community together and created long-lasting friendships and networking that laid the groundwork for several other groups.

Jackie was on a TV show many years ago and informed the audience about a meeting at my home for younger Black lesbians. At the meeting people who felt disconnected from the community became connected. Lisa Pickens and Karen Long began African American Womyns Alliance, which consisted of a younger womyn's activity and discussions group. In addition to another group for all womyn. It lasted for years and provided emotional support and sisterhood for many. Many of us involved with AWA became founding members of Affinity, which currently has discussion groups, workshops, literary events and skills-building activities for Black lesbians.

Jackie recruited me as a rape victim advocate. I got up several nights at 2 or 3 a.m. going to help girls and womyn in crisis, as a result of efforts she made. I mention all of this to tell you that this is my story in relation to Jackie—and only a small (although monumental) part of it. I have talked with many who know Jackie's Goddess-like weavings, as she is the backbone of the Black lesbian community in Chicago. Everyone who I talked with about this story had the highest praises for her and agreed there is nothing she would not do for a womon. She is co-founder of a womyn's center in a mostly Black city college which helps womyn with issues related to rape, abuse, lesbianism and other issues. Her goodness goes on and on, but I am running out of paper. To the womon of the decade, thanks for the past 10 years from me and many others.

▼▼▼▼

REGGIE WHITE GOES ON AND ON The OMAHA WORLD-HERALD had this report April 21: "Retired Green Bay Packers defensive end Reggie White says he is on a mission from God. More than 1,000 people came to Omaha's Orpheum Theater on Tuesday to hear the message of the 'Minister of Defense,' who served as guest speaker for the spring fund-raiser of AAA Crisis Pregnancy Center, which opposes abortion. ... The devil has taken control of the news media, the 1998 NFL Defensive Player of the Year said, commenting on the backlash that hit him after he made what some considered a gay-bashing speech before the Wisconsin Legislature last year. He called homosexuality 'one of the biggest sins' in the Bible."

Paid Volunteers Needed!

African-American Men

who have sex with men are needed to participate in a research project being conducted at

Loyola University Chicago

The study examines racial, sexual, and gender identity development. Volunteers are paid \$20 to complete a confidential survey lasting 60 minutes.

Interested individuals may
call (773) 508-8903
for more information

It happens in *Our Community*, too.

Support Group for lesbians who
experience abuse from their partners.

Call Daphne at the Women's
Program: 773/847-4417



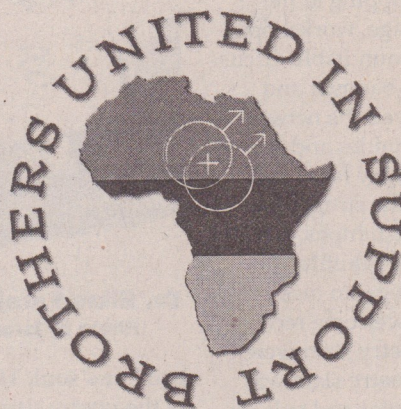
North and South side locations available

NAMASTE

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*I see the Divinity in you.
Look at me and see yourself.
Look inside yourself and offer your help...*

Chicago's oldest
peer-led support
group for same
gender loving men
of African descent
with HIV



Bayard Rustin
Award winner

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1998
1999

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July 8-11

Camp Ronora, Watervliet, MI

A weekend of workshops,
relaxation and brotherhood.



A program of
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1258 W. Belmont
773.404.8726

'And Still We Rise—Visions Toward Our Future': Chicago Black LBGT Unity Confab

by Sherri Jackson

A vision is the manner in which one sees or conceives of something. A person or thing of extraordinary beauty and a mental image produced by the imagination. Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays held their fifth annual Unity Conference at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place from April 16-18. There were 450 attendees this year. The keynote speakers were Barbara Smith, Dr. Elias Farajaje-Jones and the Rev. Carol Johnson.

Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays must have had one heck of a vision. What I witnessed over the weekend only could have happened with a vision and faith. And we must not forget the many efforts and the support from

so many other organizations and people who gave so much time in making this happen as well.

Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered folks traveled from afar to attend the conference. This conference had so much to offer the arts, shopping at the Virtual Village, workshops, panel and roundtable discussions and a banquet and gala. I enjoyed the networking opportunities and the meeting of new faces and discussing the struggles as well as the triumphs. Most of all I love the beautiful women you get to meet.

Friday, a welcome reception and poetry slam were held. The poetry slam was diverse in color and culture with much to offer the mind,



Dr. Elias Farajaje-Jones
Photo by Israel Wright

body and soul. The winner of the poetry slam was Staceyann Chin, who came

to join fellow brothers and sisters all the way from New York's Nuyorican Cafe, along with fellow New Yorker Peter of the Earth. The second place went to Phoenix and the third to Duriel Harris, last year's slam winner, who won a runoff with Juarez Hawkins and Tony. The coordinator of the slam was C.C. Carter and The Literary Exchange sponsored prizes for the winners.

Saturday's opening address was by Dr. Elias Farajaje-Jones. I admired the fact that he could stand there and talk about the issue of supporting our Black sisters in the community more. This support, he was reminding us, needed to come from our brothers—such as learning issues that concern women's health, sexism, and racism.

Farajaje-Jones also reminded all of us not to forget the fact that the transgendered

Turn to page 14

Appearing at Unabridged Bookstore

E. Lynn Harris

Thursday,
May 13

7:30 p.m.

Harris will be autographing his new book

Abide With Me



unabridged BOOKSTORE

3251 N. Broadway, Chicago, (773) 883-9119



The Fire Scores Against Bias ...

Team up with the
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National Team,
or May 22 game
with Poi Dog
concert following.
Outlines,
871-7610

Special
Outlines/Fire
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Saturday,
May 8, 8-10
p.m. at

StarGaze,
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Clark.
Lots of Team
give-aways,
soccer balls,
and Fire Fun.
Co-spon. by
Chicago
Soccer
4843 N. Western

AFFINITY



(photo by Rosalind Glanton)

OUR FACES IN OUR COMMUNITY...CREATING VISIBILITY

Thursday, May 6th: Healthy Woman Nite – 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 13th: Lez Chat – “Safer Sex” – 7:00 p.m.

Saturday May 15th: 40 Plus “Open Social – 40 Plus Reunion” 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Friday, May 28th: “It’s a Play Thang”

Join us for Videos, Games, Food, and Fun – 7:00 p.m.

Wednesdays, TAE BO with C.C. Carter 6:45 – 8:00 p.m.

(call for fee info etc...)

All events located in Hyde Park unless otherwise noted

5650 S. Woodlawn (garden level)

Voice mail (312) 409-7609

CALENDAR

Wed., April 28

WTTW Channel 11 PBS presents Bill Moyers in Conversation w/ Bishop Desmond Tutu 9p.

Thursday, April 29

The Chicago Cultural Center Duke Ellington's birthday honored @ 1p, free, @ Randolph Cafe. (312)744-1426.

Geared For Life a Detroit organization that provides education & assistance to PWAs. Party weekend through 2 May. www.geared4life.org/events.htm

Friday, April 30

The Autonomous Zone Film "History of Politics of Rhythm and Blues," a video/narrative on the 1960s by queer activist Darrel Gordon. 6:30p. (773) 252-6019.

Gerber/Hart Library Grand Opening Weekend of events. Today: Dance the night away with Gerber/Hart, at Berlin, 954 W. Belmont. Food, prizes, cash bar, male and female dancers. No admission 8p-midnight. 773-381-8030.

Horizons Community Services Youth Grp HOUSE PARTY (ages 14-23 only) 7-10p @ 961 W. Montana; (773) 472-6469.

Hoxie's Jan Coleman performs, 1801 W. Lawrence. (773) 989-4800.

Insight Art Women's Performance Jam. 7p. \$7m 1545 W. Morse, 3rd floor. (773) 973-1521.

Northwestern U. Film and Video Fest Presents "Flicker," some of finest student films across U.S. Gay filmmaker John Waters is keynote speaker today, 2-4 p.m. He will also open the fest at 8 p.m. Call (847) 467-5347. Waters is famous for *Hairspray*, *Cry Baby*, *Pink Flamingos*.

The Rails Green, Master Mixer Spen. **Temptations** Fundraiser to benefit Northwest Action Against Rape. 6-8:30p party w/ buffet & beer, \$5.

Urban Gateways Annual Spring Benefit Gala to benefit arts in education programs. 6:30p, Navy Pier's Grand Ballroom. (312) 922-0440.

Saturday, May 1

Autonomous Zone May Day "Raze the Walls" video on American justice system. IWW speaker Mike Lee. 8p. 878-6569. Food Not Bombs cooks 9:30a & distributes 1:30p Wilson/Sheridan. 252-6019.

Blackstone Hotel 11th tutor/mentor leadership & volunteer training conference. 8a-1p. 636 S. Michigan. (312) 467-2889.

Brother Jimmy's BBQ Virginia Slims Dueling Divas/Open Hand Chicago Benefit, featuring Soul Intention, 10p, 2909 N. Sheffield. (773) 528-0888.

Brown Elephant Resale Shop Silent auction for a 1950s motorcycle w/sidecar that may have been built for the Chinese military. 3651 N. Halsted.

Chi Commission on Human Relations & It's Time IL co-host transgender forum (orig scheduled for Mar 6), 11a-2p @ DePaul Egan Urban Center. Info (708) 535-1506; email ItsTimeIL@aol.com.

DuSable Museum "A Tribute to Alvin Ailey," 2p. (773) 947-0677.

Gerber/Hart Library Grand Opening Weekend. Today: Gala Grand Opening, 6 p.m. cocktail reception, followed by dinner and entertainment and dancing by local artists. \$65 for GH members, \$100 for nonmembers (includes membership). 1127 W. Granville, 773-381-8030.

Hoxie's Jan Coleman performs, 1801 W. Lawrence (773) 989-4800.

Million Marijuana March high noon at corner of Jackson/Dearborn

Sundance Channel She Said Cinema, films of over 29 female film makers to be featured throughout May.

WACT (Womyn of All Cultures/Together) meet for brunch 1p @ Affinity, 5650 S Woodlawn (garden level). (773) 784-8922 or (773) 235-5847. 5th anniversary event.

Wheaton United Methodist Church Dance, Inc. presents "Turn Up the Heat" women-only dance in Evanston. 8p, \$10/advance, \$13/door. 2214 Ridge Ave. Tickets avail. Chicago 35, Mountain Moving Coffeehouse, Kindred Hearts Friday Night Event.

Sunday, May 2

The Fourth Presbyterian Church's Forum For Gay & Lesbian Concerns & AIDS Pastoral Network presents "AIDS: Shaping Our Response." Through May 23rd. Tonight: a time of experience sharing. 9:45-10:45am. 126 E. Chestnut. (312) 787-4570.

Gerber/Hart Library Grand Opening Weekend of events. Today: Ribbon Cutting ceremony at noon. Until 8 p.m., theatre and music performance, author readings, along with refreshments. Performers and readers include C.C. Carter, Sanford Gaylord, Sukie de la Croix, Rick Reed, Linda Licina, Jorjet Harper, Juanita Crespo, Rick Karlin, Preston Shumaker, D.L. Sanders, Lynnell Stephani, and more. 1127 W. Granville, 773-381-8030.

Tuesday, May 4

The Film Center of the Art Institute Boyz In the Hood @ 6p. Columbus Dr./Jackson. (312)443-3733.

HotHouse Robbie Hunsinger Quartet. 8p, 31 E. Balbo. (312) 362-9707.

Temptations 8:30 p.m.: Chicago Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce and Bailwick Theatre present Greg Louganis at a reception, free to members, \$10 to guests, cash bar, hors d'oeuvres. At 10 p.m., general public meets Louganis and cast of Larry Kramer's *Just Say No*. Sponsored by Alizé.

WTTW Ch. 11 Forgotten Fires, documentary about KKK black church burnings in 1995. 11p.

Wed., May 5

AIDS Alternative Health Project Free educational and screening site for National Anxiety Disorder Screening Day at AAHC's Uptown clinic. (773) 561-2800.

All Jokes Aside Gay Pride Reunion, 3rd annual, Ivanhoe Theatre, 750 W. Wellington, 773-643-0245, 773-779-2399. Featuring Mo'Classy, Mo'Sassy (Monique) and special guest André Kelly, Coco from Detroit and Tony Sculfield (Comic View and BET). \$10 advance, \$12 at door, show 7 p.m.

HotHouse The Black Earth Trio 8p, \$5, 31 E. Balbo. (312) 362-9707.

Thursday, May 6

92nd Street Y Reflections on Women and Midlife. Dorothy Allison, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot & Susan Berrin. 8:15p, \$18, 1395 Lexington. (212) 996-1100.

Big Chicks Feast of Fools Cabaret. 9p, \$5, 5024 N. Sheridan. (773) 784-3397.

Chi Cultural Center Tribute to Ella Fitzgerald & Duke Ellington @ 6:30p. Brown bag lunch discussion: Landmarks of Chicago & New York @ 12:15p. Also, downtown Thurs Nite hosts "Hollywood on Lake Michigan," trolley-bus tour of glam Chi-town Loop film history, led by cine-author Arnie Bernstein. 1st-come-1st-served seating, 5:30-7:30p, free. Meet @ CCC, 77 E. Randolph, (312) 742-1174. **First Unitarian Church** Affinity meeting:

healthy woman nite, 7p. 5650 S. Woodlawn. (312) 409-7609.

Giribar Leading Ladies of Lesbian Comedy, Hysterical Women, 8p, 2625 N. Halsted.

HotHouse Arts Midwest honors the 1998/1999 Jazz Masters. 7:30p, \$10, 31 E. Balbo. (312) 362-9707.

Friday, May 7

Brother Jimmy's BBQ Virginia Slims Dueling Divas/Open Hand Chicago Benefit, featuring Butterfly McQueen, 10p. 2909 N. Sheffield. (773) 528-0888.

The Community Media Workshop at Columbia College training. Intro to Professional Media Relations geared toward community leaders working on the prevention & treatment of STD/HIV/AIDS. 8:30a-12:30p, \$10. 623 S. Wabash, ste 201. (312) 344-6400.

Condo Club The hottest male culacho contest. \$100 cash prize every Friday through May 28st. \$1 Tequila shots. 9p, \$5, includes one drink. 1931 N. Milwaukee. (773) 235-5875.

Howard Brown Health Center Counseling & Psychotherapy prof seminar: "Issues & Interventions w/ Sexual Minority Youth," 2-4p, \$20 (\$10st) @ (773) 388-8904.

Saturday, May 8

AIDS Foundation of Chicago "Not Just Song & Dance: *La Noche Caliente*" 151 E. Wacker Dr. Tix (312) 922-2322.

Autonomous Zone Sandpaper collective meets at noon. Food Not Bombs cooks @ 9:30a & distributes @ 1:30p at Wilson/Sheridan. Kindred Spirits opposing gentrification in West town. 342-7545.

Chicago Fire Soccer Party at StarGaze, 8-10p, 5419 N. Clark, with free giveaways of soccer tix and items, free. Sponsored with OUTLINES, proceeds of tix sales for games to Horizons and Howard Brown. Call (773) 871-7610.

DuSable Museum Songs of the South Side. 1-2:30p, (773) 947-0677.

Mountain Moving Coffeehouse for Womyn & Children presents women's music legends Cris Williamson & Tret Fure, 7:30p @ Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1650 W. Foster; (312) 409-0276.

Onyx Leather Dance @ IML @ the Congress Hotel. Info www.onyxmen.com.

Rainbow/PUSH Coalition Women Connecting Day, 9a-noon, 930 E. 50th. (773) 373-3366.

Sunday, May 9

Autonomous Zone Food Not Bombs cooks @ 9:30a & distributes @ 1:30p at Wilson/Sheridan. 252-6019.

Cultural Center Sunday Magazine w/ classical & jazz guitarist Fareed Haque, authors from Augustus Burley Elementary School & chef Judith Hines demonstrates cooking with flowers. Noon, free, Randolph Cafe. 77 E. Randolph. (312) 744-6630.

Hoxie's Come Out and Dine, a new g&l dining club meets at 12:15p, 1801 W. Lawrence. (773) 784-2188.

N-trigue Mother's Day Extravaganza w/ lingerie/fashion show & buffet. \$10, valet parking, 6p-12a, 2626 N. Halsted. (773) 333-9725.

Tuesday, May 11

Chicago Hilton & Towers Women Employed Institute Silver Anniversary. Guest speaker Tipper Gore. 11:15/reception, 12p/lunch. 720 S. Michigan. (312) 782-3902.

The Film Center of the Art Institute *The Watermelon Woman* @ 6p. Columbus Dr./Jackson. (312)443-3733.

WTTW-Channel 11 *In the Life*, quarterly lesbian show, 11 p.m. Features: Gay cruise ships being turned away; travel to Bali; airlines controversy; Condega

Women & Children First Books

Friday, May 14

7:30 p.m.

April Sinclair:

I Left My Back

Door Open

If you've loved her for *Coffee Will Make You Black* and *Ain't Gonna Be the Same Fool Twice*, her new novel won't disappoint you. If you don't know her yet, let Sinclair charm you with her warm and funny style, as she reads from this new story about a 40ish Chicago radio D.J. who wonders about the chances of meeting Mr. Right.



April Sinclair



Visit our website at
<http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

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Wheelchair Accessible • Parking in Rear
M-T 11-7; W-Th F 11-9; Sat. 10-7; Sun. 11-6

Homemakers Project, women making a difference; a new documentary "Rock the Boat"; and deaf and outspoken gays.

Wed., May 12

Nat'l Young Women's Day of Action

Calling all pro-choice women & girls to help plan a rally & march. 6p, 59 E. Van Buren, 17th fl. (773) 604-1654.

WTTW Ch. 11 Swingin' With the Duke: w/ Wynton Marsalis @ 9p.

Thursday, May 13

AIDS Ministry of Illinois presents Dining Out for Life. (773) 935-4663.

Unabridged Books E. Lynn Harris signs copies of his new book, *Abide with Me*, 7:30p, 3251 Broadway, (773) 883-9119

Friday, May 14

Hot House The Advisory Council on Gay & Lesbian Issues presents Color Triangle Jam. 8-9p community organization resource fair, 9-11p Big Smith drumming, Hysterical Women comedy, A Real Read & Anthony Peebles, 11p-2a DJs Fred Wells & Lora Branch: hip hop, rock, r&b, Latin, bhanga, drum & bass. \$10 incl. food & dancing. Proceeds to Color Triangle's efforts to raise the gblt community's awareness of racism & develop methods to minimize community tensions. 31 E. Balbo, (773) 381-5091.

New Regal Theatre Columbia College presents Stopin' at the Regal. Performances by Center for Black Music Research's Ensemble Stop-Time and Ensemble Kalinda Chicago. \$10-35, 1645 E. 79th. (773) 721-9301.

Women & Children First April Sinclair reads and signs her new book, *I Left My Back Door Open*. 7:30p, 5233 N. Clark. (773) 769-9299.

Saturday, May 15

Athena Production's Annual Midwest Womyn's Autumnfest in DeKalb, IL, Sept. 5, (815) 748-5359, www.mwautumnfest.com Singers, artisans, fun in the sun, and more. Today is deadline.

Body Electric School Celebrating the Body Erotic, a two-day workshop exploring connections between touch, physical pleasure and spiritual awareness. (312) 819-1524.

First Unitarian Church Affinity open social, 40plus, 4-8p. 5650 S. Woodlawn. (312) 409-7609.

Sunday, May 16

First Congregational Church Chicago a cappella. Go Down, Moses. 7:30p, \$20, \$15/seniors, \$10/students. 1445 Hinman, Evanston. (773) 755-1628.

The Fourth Presbyterian Church's Forum For Gay & Lesbian Concerns & AIDS Pastoral Ntk "AIDS: Shaping Our Response." (312) 787-4570.

John R. Hammell Awards Brunch Tracy Baim & The Playboy Foundation honored for their contributions to LGBT community. Awards brunch 11:30a-2:30p, Union League Club of Chicago, 65 E. Jackson. (312) 201-9740.

The Rails Flesh or Fantasy Sundays, grand opening, at Prop House, guest dancers Cobra and Baby Face, 1675 N. Elston, (708) 802-1705.

Monday, May 17

Bailiwick Repertory A Diva, A Diver, and a Dissident to benefit Bailiwick's Pride '99. Featuring Larry Kramer (here for opening of his *Just Say No*), Olympic gold medalist Greg Louganis (starring in *Just Say No*), and Allexandra Billings. Lots of food, entertainment and more. 773-883-1090.

Hoxie's Chicago Area Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce hosts roundtable

professional networking, 1801. W. Lawrence. (847) 256-8446.

Howard Brown presents A Taste for Every Palate, a food and wine tasting gala benefitting the Women's Program at Howard Brown. 6:30-8:30p, Cafe Brauer in Lincoln Park. (773) 388-1600.

Tuesday, May 18

Women & Children

First Bonnie Morris' signs *Eden Built by Eves: The Culture of Women's Music Festivals*. 7:30p, (773) 769-9299.

Wed., May 19

Autonomous Zone Anti-Police Brutality march. noon @ city hall. 252-6019.

DuSable Museum Remembering Malcolm. 10:30a-4:30p. (773) 947-0677.

Friday, May 21

Ameritech Jazz @ Symphony Center Sonny Rollins 8p, \$15-80. @ 220 S Michigan. Tix (312) 294-3000.

Saturday, May 22

Autonomous Zone Food Not Bombs cooks @ 9:30a & distributes @ 1:30p at Wilson/Sheridan. 252-6019.

Chicago Neighborhood Tours Wicker Park/Humboldt Park, (312) 742-1190

Double Door Virginia Slims Dueling Divas FINALS/Open Hand Chicago Benefit, featuring Illusions of Abbey, Soul Intention, Butterfly McQueen & Flammable Dress, 10p, 1551 N. Damen. (773) 489-3160.

DuSable Museum Looking Good: The Face of Black Chicago. 1-2:30p. & "The Lord of the Dance," (773) 947-0677.

Lesbian Community Cancer Project WISTERIA Benefit concert at Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1650 W. Foster, 7:30 p.m. MC Jackie Anderson, Artemis Singers, poets C.C. Carter and Carrie Brecke, viola Katy Clusen, Dykes on Pipes, GirlFunk, Karen Mooney, Paula Walowitz, Women Spirit Drimmers. \$10-\$20, tix at door. Call (708) 358-1701, GoWisteria@aol.com

Unity Temple Chicago a cappella. Go Down, Moses. 8p, \$20, \$15/seniors, \$10/students. 875 Lake, Oak Park. (773) 755-1628.

Sunday, May 23

Autonomous Zone Food Not Bombs cooks @ 9:30a & distributes @ 1:30p at Wilson/Sheridan. 252-6019.

The Rails Flesh or Fantasy Sundays, at Prop House, dancers, 1675 N. Elston, (708) 802-1705.

Tuesday, May 25

GLSEN/Chicago meets at Sulzer Library, 7-9p, 4455 N. Lincoln to discuss union issues. (847) 825-3037.

WTTW Ch.11 Frontline "Mandela", 9p.

Thursday, May 27

House of Blues KC & the Sunshine Band.

HotHouse Guillermo Gregorio, Fred Lonberg-Holm & Jeb Bishop. 8p, \$6, 31 E. Balbo. (312) 362-9707.

International Mr Leather Weekend thru Mon, May 31 @ Ramada Congress Hotel. Info www.imrl.com.

Marigold Bowl register for Chicago MSA



April Sinclair signs books at Women & Children First May 14, E. Lynn Harris at Unabridged Books May 13.

Wilson/Sheridan. 252-6019.

The Film Center of the Art Institute The Underground Orchestra @ 4, 6 & 8p. Columbus Dr./Jackson. (312)443-3733.

Sunday, May 30

The Rails Flesh or Fantasy Sundays, Memorial Weekend blast with super porn star Tyson Cain, 1675 N. Elston, (708) 802-1705.

Rainbow Families Playing in the Park, meet @ Indian Boundary Park. 11a-2p. (773) 388-1600, ext. 3313.

Monday, May 31

9th Annual Black Lesbian and Gay Family Day Picnic 10a-dusk, Lots 23&24, Rock Creek Park, Washington, D.C. BPicnicpp@aol.com.

Saturday, June 5

1999 PFLAG Midwest Regional Conference presents "Renewing & Redeeming Society." Keynote address by Rev. Jimmy Creech. Workshops include Multifith Panel, Exploring Transgender Issues, Making Schools Safe, Lesbian Health & Children's Museum diversity exhibit, followed by dinner at Rico's. 8a, Chicago Circle Center, 750 S. Halsted. (312) 413-8619.

DuSable Museum Black Music Month. 1-2:30p. & "Shirley Horn," 2p. (773) 947-0677.

Mountain Moving Coffeehouse for Womyn & Children presents singer/songwriter/guitarist Deidre McCalla, 7:30p @ Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1650 W Foster; (312) 409-0276. (Chem-free space; no boys over 2; call ahead for ASL interp.)

Printer's Row Book Fair Five tented blocks of booksellers, poetry readings, panel discussions, etc, (312) 987-9896.

Wake-up your muse.

Untie your tongue.

Get ready for . . . WordRising/BLACKLINES 4 Th Annual

Pride Celebration

Poetry Contest



Open To All Lesbians and Gays of Color
WordRising: The Fusion of Time & Space To Express Yourself.
Read June's BLACKLines for more details.

VOLUNTEER HELP WANTED

Volunteering is a great way to get involved in our community and to meet other people. We need your help in the following areas:

▼ ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ▼

daytime or evenings, we need all types of help.

▼ SPECIAL EVENTS ▼

Pride Dance '99, LGBT Golf Outing, Market Days
Have fun and be seen by thousands!

- ▼ ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT
- ▼ LESBIAN & GAY HELPLINE
- ▼ OLDER ADULT PROGRAM
- ▼ PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES
- ▼ YOUTH SERVICES

*Program volunteers
receive special
training. Start
the process now!*

Interested? Have questions? Ready to start?
Call Jim Klein at (773) 472-6469, ext. 246

HORIZONS COMMUNITY SERVICES
Chicago's Lesbian & Gay Community Center



R U READY?

**A Discussion Group
for
Suburban
Black Gay Men**

Meetings every 2nd Tuesday
1145 Westgate #210, Oak Park

For Info call 708-445-2584
Food & Drink Provided

Facilitated by
Preston L. Shumaker

**Come, Join the
Evolution!**

HARAMBE JAHARD

ArtsExpress

**** Gay/les/bi/queer/trans content or interest

Theatre

Previews/Opening Nights

April 30: The Red Address, by David Ives, is a searing drama about a successful middle aged businessman whose life is suddenly and inexplicably caught up in an unforgiving vortex of fate. His darkest secrets are revealed in a sexual and emotional expose that resonates with the overtones of Greek tragedy. Thru June 6. Red Wolf Theatre Company, Inc. 773-508-0020

May 2: The Adventures of Connie Chancía, multi-media performance commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Barrio Historian Connie Chancía, looks at the border, cross-cultural, gender issues, stereotypes, thru multi-lingual humor, performance, music, with comedy and a cello. One woman show showcases multi-disciplinary scholarship while keeping audiences laughing. Thru May 29, 7pm. 312 738-1503

May 5: Urban Funk: Sights, Sounds, Riffs, and Attitudes Music, relationships, dreams that inhabit a city. Michael Myers has done *Reflections of Mothers So Young*, an outreach program featuring stories written by pregnant teens, and *Uncle Tom and Other Heroes*. Stories on Stage, WBEZ and Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago 312 397-4010

May 12: The Old Settler 1940s Harlem, two middle-aged sisters change when they take Husband, a boarder. Poignant tale of loves lost, found. Thru June 26 Organic 773 404 4700

May 14: Livin' Fat, This hilarious comedy centers around the various circumstances leading up to the central character making a decision about what to do when he finds a whole heap of money. Thru June 6, South Shore Cultural Center, part of the Paul Robeson Theater Series 312-747-2580

May 15: Go Down, Moses Chicago a cappella traces roots of the African-American spiritual from the 1800s to present, an intimate evening of moving music and powerful readings. First Unitarian Church 773 755-1628 or 1 800 SING-WOW

**** **May 15: Stupid Kids** a music-video infused statement on growing up gay in suburban America, the relationship between pop culture and identity in the lives of queer youth, particularly when facing life-altering issues. Part of Roadworks partnership with Horizons/Youth Service Project, Season of Concern, The Teen Living Program, Aspira Alternative High School and NOW. At Victory Gardens. Roadworks 312 492-7155

**** **May 17: A Diva, A Diver, and a Dissident: Just Say Yes to Larry Kramer** Special benefit evening for the nine premiers of Pride 99, with music, comedy, speechifying, with Larry Kramer, Alexandra Billings, and Greg Louganis. Bailiwick 773 883-1090

May 20: Anchorman (A Blues Operetta) Teen must decide between choices presented by Mom, Dad, other adults around him. ETA Creative Arts Foundation, Inc. 773 752-3955

**** **May 27: Just Say No With Larry Kramer** in residence, and Olympian Greg Louganis making his Chicago acting debut, 773 883-1090

**** **May 28: Shirts and Skins** Stars Tim Miller digging into the laundry, getting naked, trying on shirts as he visits moments of conception, growing up, Act-ing UP, charting one gay man's take on the changes of the last two decades of the millennium. One week-end only. Bailiwick (773) 883-1090

**** **June 2: Conversations With a Diva** Jonathan Wilson directs actor Byron Stewart in one-man dish and dirt. A brother's journey from sissy to a proud black gay man. Pride '99. Bailiwick (773) 883-1090

In Performance

The Dreamers Family jolted by assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is forced to re-examine their lives, choices. Thru May 2. ETA Creative Arts Foundation, Inc. 773 752-3955

**** **Everyone's Coming Out, Rosie!** GayCo Comedy sketch reopening. Donny's Skybox, Second City, thru May 8, 312 337-3992

**** **Falsettos** Timeless Tony winner by William Finn. Athenaeum 2936 N Southport, thru June 6, 773 902-1500

**** **Jails, Hospitals and a Hip Hop** Obie Award-winning performer Danny Hoch does eight characters, including a jailed addict with AIDS, with powerful stories to tell covering a range of contemporary experience. Museum of Contemporary Art 312 280-2660

**** **Joan Crawford Goes to Hell** Inspired by the movie Mommie Dearest, Sweetcorn Playhouse 312 409-3925
Wang Dang Doodle (The Life Story of KoKo Taylor—Queen of the Blues) Her life, history of women in Blues. Black ensemble theater's premiere production starring Queen Roy as Koko Taylor, Rick Stone, Linda Lamar, Gary Wilson. Black Ensemble Th, open run. 4520 N Beacon 773 769-4451

Dance

Apr 29: Ralph Lemon and Bebe Miller New direction for dance on film, bringing together two African -American choreographers with distinct visions in a film/dance work challenging conventions in both forms while examining historic dynamics between African-American man and woman. Along with screening, solos by both, created for this premier. Thru May 1. The Dance Center 773 989-3310

Art/Photo

African American Cultural Center Dell Washington, paintings. Henry Jones *On the Edge*, paintings to open October. 312 996-9549

**** **Aldo Castillo Gallery** *The Gallery Expansion Party and Opening for José Luis Cuevas Exhibit 5-9 PM* What is Our Strangeness, 312 337-2536

Chicago Cultural Center A World in a Weekend: Mexico City, Mexico Sights and sounds of faraway places Each month, musicians, actors, artisans, and cultural experts present the unique arts, culture of one of Chicago's 22 sister, friendship cities. May highlights the cultural wealth of Mexico City. May 7 thru May 9 312-744-6630

The Dusable Museum of African American History New: Sundays Free. Also *Harold Washington In Office*, permanent exhibition, w/ composite office setting; memorabilia; personal, career effects. 740 E 56th Place 57th and Cottage Grove Ave 773 947-0600

Woman Made Cut and Paste, with a focus on collage, and *Shrines for our Fathers*, 1900 S Prairie 312 328-0038.

CHICAGO BLACK LESBIANS AND GAYS

We salute our community and corporate supporters for their own "unity" and strong support of our successful CBLG Annual Unity Conference

The City of Chicago Department of Health
BLACKlines/OUTlines/Lambda Publications

Horizons Community Services

DuPont

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Chicago Foundation for Women

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Rhonda McDaniel
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Sherry Jackson
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Susan O'Dell
Test Positive Aware Network
The Rails Entertainment Group
The Greater Chicago Committee
The Chicago Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

The Literary Exchange
The Family of Robert Schuitz
Thom Dombrowski
Thom Ford
Tower Records
transGenesis
Uncle Tannous Restaurant
University of Illinois at Chicago
Department of Psychology
Venus Magazine
W. Robert Schuitz, III

You are invited to attend CBLG's next citywide meeting!

Saturday May 8, 1999 from 10am - Noon at
1515 E. 52nd Place 2nd Floor (Harambee Wellness Center)

CBLG, P. O. Box 14811
Chicago, IL 60614-11811 Hotline (312) 409-

...and still We Rise: Visions toward our future

Harambee Center serves South Side

by Robert Schultz

A bright, spacious and welcoming environment awaits visitors to the Harambee Wellness Center. The newly opened Harambee Wellness Center provides services to African-American gays and lesbians on the South Side.

The Harambee Center is located in the urbane Hyde Park neighborhood and Harambee is a part of Howard Brown Health Center. The services that Harambee will provide are, according to Howard Brown Executive Director Eileen Durkin, consistent with the agency's mission to meet the health needs of the LGBT community.

Durkin explained that creating the center started from a desire to reach out geographically and racially to all parts of the LGBT community.

Certainly, there few people within the LGBT community who don't have their own horror story to tell about the insensitivity they encounter when seeking medical services from the dominate society. Harambee Wellness Center offers a South Side alternative that is culturally sensitive to African Americans. Site manager Rashaad Burgess is one of the many African-American staff at the site who are creating an environment of safety and cultural affirmation. Both Burgess and Durkin recounted the efforts to locate a site and to name it. Some South Side healthcare activists who were not gay or lesbian were initially hostile to Howard Brown. This writer was present when Durkin met with members of the South Side HIV/AIDS Resource Providers (SHARP) when Howard Brown's intentions to establish a clinic became known.

Burgess and Durkin noted the importance of the work with the community advisory board throughout the process to make

sure that the needs of the broad African-American LGBTG community were met. Durkin recounted that she learned about the various nuances of identity among African-American gays and lesbians. Durkin went on to emphasize that Howard Brown's goal for the Harambee Center is to meet a limited specified range of needs and not to become a full-fledged health center.

Currently the Harambee Center is focusing on HIV testing and counseling, and the Gamba men's discussion group. Planning about how the Harambee Center can meet the needs of lesbians are underway. And plans for a community open house during June are being developed. Call 773-752-7867 for more information.

HBHC files bias suit

In related news, Howard Brown Health Center has filed a complaint with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations against Aegis Properties Corp. and Hyde Park Bank for refusing to lease space to HBHC

for its Harambee Wellness Center because it provides HIV-related services and healthcare for gays and lesbians, HBHC stated in a press release.

For the past two years, HBHC has been seeking to move its South Side prevention and education program from the South Shore neighborhood to Hyde Park. HBHC sought space in the Hyde Park Bank Building and, on at least three occasions, approached Aegis Properties about renting the space in the bank. Each time Aegis was initially eager to showcase the property and discuss leasing the property until it learned HBHC provides services to the lesbian community, HBHC alleges. Aegis management refused to go forward, informing HBHC that it feared losing other current and potential tenants because of the types of services HBHC provides and that the provision of HIV-related services was "problematic."

HBHC eventually moved Harambee Wellness Center to 1515 E. 52nd Place.

Lookin' Good...

Join a gym to work on the brother *outside* -

Feelin' Good!

Join us in focusing on the brother *inside* !



773.288.1535

A Discussion Group for Gay & Bi Brothers of Color

Meetings every 3rd Friday
Resurrection M.C.C.

Davis Hall 1164 E. 58th Street
starting at 7 pm

Preston L. Shumaker, Workshop Coordinator
Sponsored by Sinai Family Health Centers

L.A. workshop

The 2nd annual BOOK HOUSE CAFE Reader Writer Publisher Workshop/Book Signing is June 19 in Oakland, Calif. Keynote speaker is Jewelle Gomez, author of *Don't Explain, Forty-Three September, The Gilda Stories* and *Oral Tradition*.

Other authors expected: G.B. Mann, James Earl Hardy, Lisa Moore, Sharon Bridgforth.

Place: Laney College B-Building 900 Fallon St. Time: 3 p.m.-5 p.m. Cost: Free

The workshop is held in conjunction with OBGLT Pride weekend within the 2nd annual It's Natural Conference, an all-day event with workshops.

Also coming to Oakland, in 2000, "Honoring BGLT History Week," Feb. 6-13, 2000 1st BOOK HOUSE CAFE Reader Writer Publisher Conference. Call (510) 433-7105, tbhcafe@pacbell.net

African-American Women On Tour

The Mobil African American Women on Tour conference series kicks off its 1999 series with an extensive range of workshops, forums and keynote presentations.

Now in its ninth year, African American Women on Tour will visit six cities: Los Angeles April 9-11; Brooklyn July 9-11; Philadelphia July 23-25; Chicago July 30-Aug. 1; Washington, D.C. Aug. 20-22; and Atlanta Aug. 27-29.

The Chicago event is at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place East: Friday, radio mogul Cathy Hughes; Saturday, poet Nikki Giovanni; and Sunday, orator Patricia Russell-McCloud; Astronaut Dr. Mae Jemison will be at the D.C. event.

Call 1-800-560-AAWOT (2298), fax to 619-560-9190, email aawot@mindspring.com or visit www.aawot.com.

ATTENTION COMMUNITY ELDERERS

Horizons invites you to drop in at their Drop-In Center on Wednesday afternoons between 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., and on the first and third Friday of every month between 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

The Center has been created as a space where Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered people 45 and older, and who are of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, can come together to make new friends and socialize.

**For more information call
The Lesbian & Gay HELPLINE
(773) 929-HELP
between 6-10 p.m. daily**

HORIZONS COMMUNITY SERVICES
Chicago's Lesbian & Gay Community Center

The Advisory Council on Gay and Lesbian Issues presents

COLOR TRIANGLE JAM

ONE COMMUNITY UNDER A GROOVE

HotHouse 31 East Balbo (700 South)

Friday, May 14, 1999

8 pm-9 pm

- Community Organization Resource Fair

9 pm-11 pm

- A Real Read (performance art troupe)
- Big Smith (drumming)
- Hysterical Women (comedy)
- Anthony Peebles (performance artist)

11 pm-2 am

- DJs Fred Wells + Lora Branch: Hip Hop, Rock, R+B, Latin, Bhangra, Drum+Bass

Co-Sponsors: OUTlines/BLACKlines/En La Vida, Lesbigan Radio, Khuli Zaban, Commonwealth Edison Employees Gay and Lesbian Organization, Lesbian Community Cancer Project

Suggested donation: \$10 (includes food and dancing)
Must be 21 or over. Wheelchair accessible.

Proceeds benefit Color Triangle's efforts to raise the lesbian/gay/trans community's awareness of racism, develop methods to minimize community tensions, and build upon examples of success. For more information on the Color Triangle Jam, please contact Jason Cox at 773/381-5091.

CBLG from 6

community was the first in many ways to pave the way for many lesbian people.

Saturday's lunch keynote was Barbara Smith. Part of her speech included readings from her new book, *The Truth That Never Hurts*, which has sold out its first print run. Smith says she writes about the life she has lived through activism, theory, gender issues, and being an out Black lesbian. She touched on such Black heroes as Audre Lorde, Angela Davis, James Baldwin, Lorraine Hansberry, and Bayard Rustin. What touched me the most was a reading about James Baldwin's funeral. Never during the eulogy was the word "gay" mentioned. This was a tribute to James Baldwin called "We Must Always Bury Our Dead Twice." I looked around, seeing the many faces diverse in color, age, gender and many sister-friends and brothers who loved during the very times she was speaking about. These same folks I thought have made a better way for me and others. I was a babe when the civil-rights era and feminist movement were unfolding. I wondered what did the next generation, the ones I am supposed to be mentoring, think of me? I truly hope I, too, have paved a way for the lesbians coming up now.

Smith spoke on the many struggles women have endured and how when the Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press was started it was Black and other women of color who made it possible. She was glad to see women of other colors besides Black in the audience—working together to make the day possible. Smith also reminded us to



Barbara Smith. Photo by Israel Wright

always challenge the "isms" in our community.

The day was full of workshops on topics that covered shared leadership, trans issues, HIV/AIDS in the Black community, and a packed Youth Institute led by Horizons Community Services youth. There were also men's and women's institutes. Presenters included former Unity Conference keynote speakers Dr. Marjorie Hill and Keith Boykin, along with Chicagoans Steve Wakefield, Max Smith and many more.

I popped into the Leather Wear workshop, focusing on the leather community and Black men who like Black men. They discussed experiences, domination and the safe zones.

Tina Taylor did a workshop on "The Body Shop—Naprath." As you walked into the room the setting was relaxing, healing, and Tina had such great interaction with her audience. She gave demonstrations and filled your head with the knowledge of the body parts. Running over to the youth workshop, I could not get a seat. There were about 45-50 people in the room. They did a skit on hate crimes and a role play on sexual pressures. These young folks were hot!! I

thought 'Why didn't they have all of this when I was young?' and 'Was I this much on the ball when I questioned my sexuality?' Laughter came from the crowd when the young man had to put the elder in place, but in a nice way, about sexual pressures. There was indeed some role-playing going on—and role reversal.

I could not get to every workshop. They all had so much to offer.

Saturday night was the banquet and gala. I enjoyed the skit with everyone playing a part from the LGBT community, talking about their vision and how they still rise. Shouts came from the crowd when poetry slam winner Staceyann Chin gave us much delight. She treated us to an encore. The Joel Hall Dancers performed and Lisa Porter sang as the band Da Fellas played music.

The closing on Sunday was by Rev. Carol Johnson and Keith Boykin. It was spiritual and informative. Boykin read an affirmation from his new book, *Respecting the Soul*, for the April 18 date: "None of us are free until all of us are free."

The co-chairs of the event were Susan Stanley and Robert Schultz. The co-chairs of the gala were Renae Ogletree and Michael

Pleasants. The co-chairs of CBLG are Lora Branch and Shelton Watson.

I felt like the weekend was a combination of the '60s-'80s mixed in with the present. As I sat there, at one point I thought of my own vision and the many visions I have. I recalled my first Unity Conference in '96, doing a workshop and meeting the many people I now work with in the community. I never thought I would be a part of the community, the LGBT community. At least not to the degree I play now. I never imagined sitting on a panel in 'shared leadership' with three people who have mentored me and now sometimes I mentor them.

And what did this mean for me and my community? I never guessed I would be a part of watching a group go through its transition with new co-chairs, new and old dreams. I saw so many groups in the crowd that make up the Black lesbian-trans community during that weekend.

I recalled my first Unity Conference with only 75 people; now it's 450. These conferences must go on and messages must be repeated over and over. If you can help one or two you have helped many. I wondered if Audre Lorde and James Baldwin were watching. If so, I think they would have been proud of the weekend. Proud that we haven't given up in the face of adversity.

I hope Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays continues, along with many other groups, to make this possible again and again.

And I thank you for giving me the chance to make a difference and be a part of you, a part of "And Still We Rise—Visions Toward Our Future."

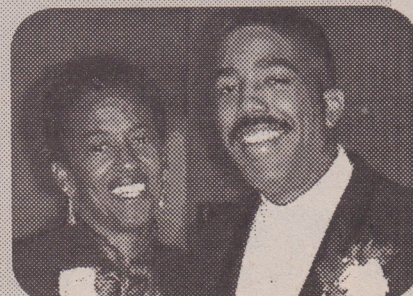
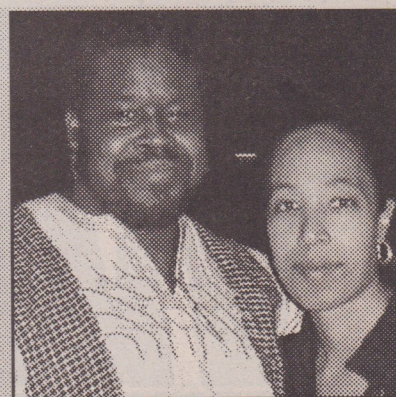
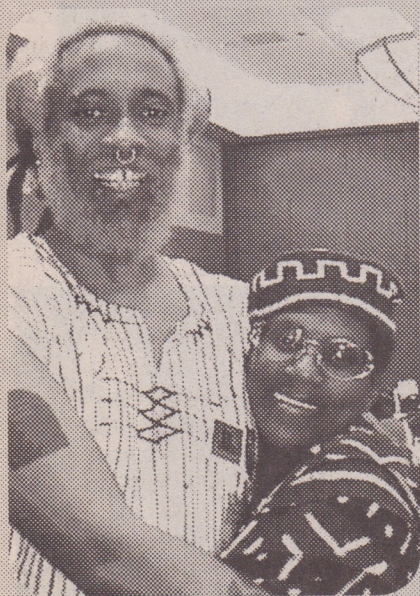


TOP, LEFT: CBLG conference co-chair Susan Stanley with New York lesbian activist Dr. Marjorie Hill. **MIDDLE:** Keynote speaker Carol Johnson. **RIGHT:** Barbara Smith and Chicago activist Vernita Gray.



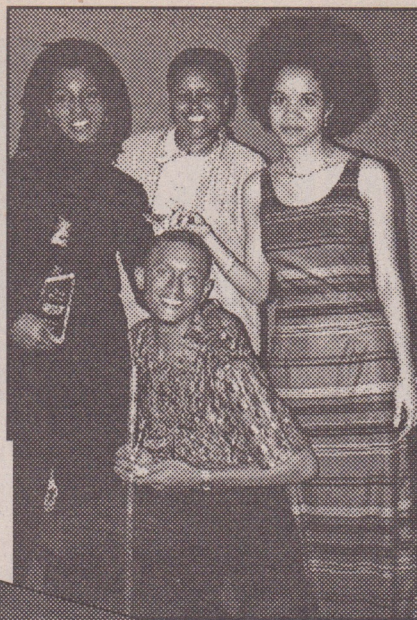
LEFT: Horizons Youth Group members at the CBLG gala. **BELOW, LEFT:** Speakers Dr. Elias Farajaje-Jones and Rev. Carol Johnson. **NEXT:** Unity V co-chairs Robert Schultz and Susan Stanley. **BELOW:** CBLG Co-chairs Shelton Watson and Lora Branch. **BOTTOM, RIGHT:** Unity V 2nd annual Gala co-chairs Renae Ogletree and Michael Pleasants.

**PHOTOS by Tracy Baim
and Israel Wright**

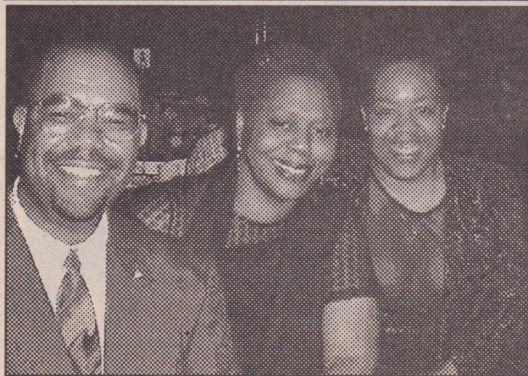
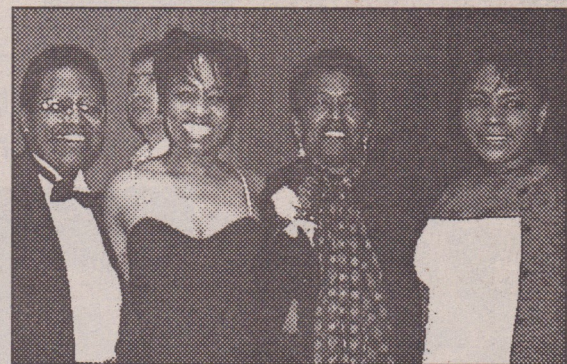
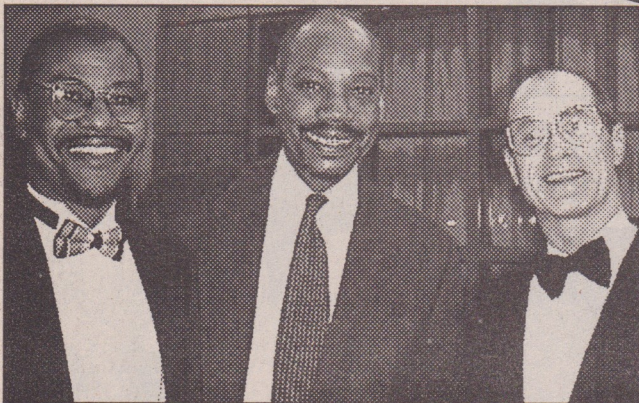




Below, left: Lorraine and Bruce were honored, among other long-term couples, at the Unity V dinner. The rest of the pics are also from Unity V. Bottom, far right is Ald. Toni Preckwinkle with Jano. PHOTOS by Tracy Baim and Israel Wright



During the CBLG Unity weekend, the 2nd national poetry slam, coordinated by C.C. Carter, was held. Far left are contestants, judges and CBLG folks. Right are Poetry contest winners. Front is Phoenix, who took 2nd place. Back row: 3rd place finisher Duriel Harris, Donna Johnson (president of Literary Exchange), and winner Staceyann Chin of New York. Chin is the only out lesbian member of the National Poetry Slam Team, and will be performing with them Aug. 10 at the national championships in Chicago. Don't miss her! She has also performed at the Apollo Theatre.



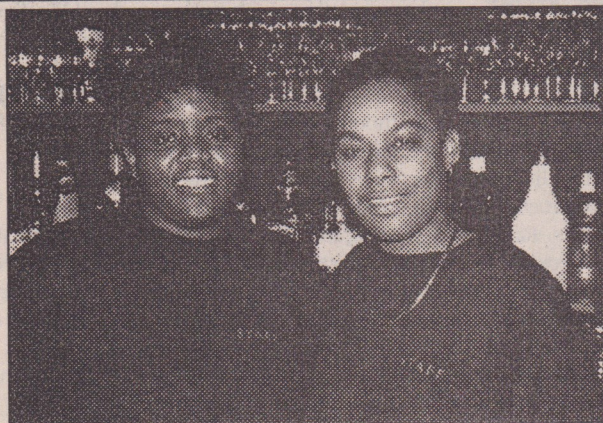


More than a hundred activists packed into the Hot House club April 18 for a Town Meeting on the "urgency of building a progressive lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movement."

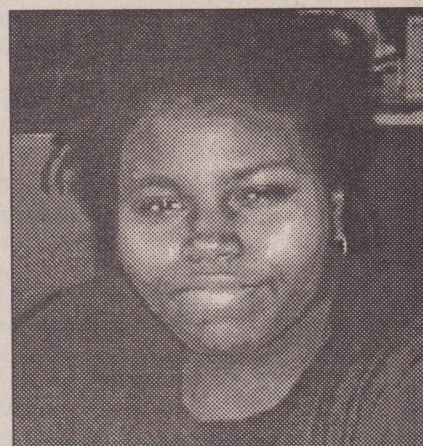
Author and revolutionary activist Barbara Smith, in town for several events and to promote

her new book, was the special guest speaker. Her remarks focused on the Ad Hoc Committee for an Open Process, the national group protesting the planned April 30, 2000 March on Washington [see OUTLINES April 21 issue for a full report]. Panelists for the Town Meeting, which lasted more than three hours, were Michael Pleasants of Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays; labor union organizer Kristen White; Neena Hemmady and Andrea Densham from Color Triangle Coalition; Andy Thayer of Chicago Anti-Bashing Network; and Kathleen Rose Winter, of CBLG and many other organizations. Top, left: Julie Cole and Lisa Pickens. Above, the panelists. Back row: Michael Pleasants, Kristen White, Neena Hemmady, Andrea Densham. Front" Andy Thayer, Barbara Smith and Kathleen Rose Winter. Left: Longtime Chicago activist Renee Hanover with keynote speaker Barbara Smith, who spoke at five Chicago-area events in April, including at two campus programs.

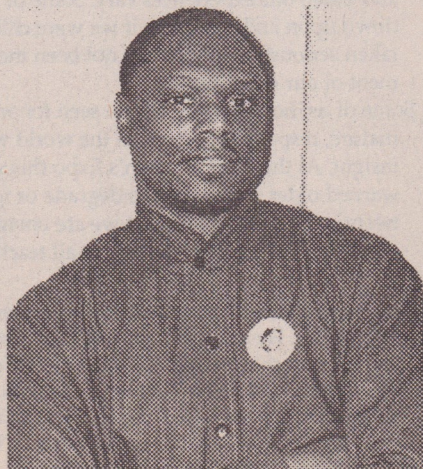
Photos by Tracy Baim



Tending bar at Club N-Trigue, with Chef Tania Fridays, Les Femme Amies Saturday night dance party, and Sunday N-Trigue fun. Pictured are Linda Gray and Rosalind Smith. The club is at Uncle Tannous, 2626 N. Halsted, (773) 333-9725, with food, dancing, and more. Right: Getting ready for the Town Meeting on Progressives Politics. Photos by Israel Wright and Tracy Baim



Outspoken gay and AIDS activist Cleo Manago was a special guest speaker at the University of Illinois-Chicago during their LGBT pride festivities. Photos by Israel Wright



the blacklines women's issue

Generations

by Leslie D. McClellan

What is it about being twenty something? You're no longer defined as a child, however, you do not have the migraines and pressures of those thirty and up. You have no real interest in hanging out with teenagers, in fact you appreciate those days being over. You are stereotyped by some older persons as young and uninformed because you don't have a mortgage, or retirement fund.

Recently, I had the opportunity to talk with one of my African-American sisters, Najala. She is a 25-year-old college student who discussed how she feels about her life and what is important to her. Before we get started, I realize we do not speak for all Black women in the Les/bi community, but this woman is the only one that responded when I sent the shout out for this interview. It pleasingly produced a more honest intimate conversation.

L: What are the most important aspects of your life right now? Why?

N: Most important for me right now, I'm starting to develop a spiritual way of life. Trying to center myself with some sort of concept or relationship with something other than myself. Like a higher power, God, creative intelligence. That is the most important part of my life because it's making my outlook and perspective on my life and the people in my environment around me [much] better. Secondly, in that whole spiritual demonstration, is my art. I'm a video student and those two things are connected for me.

L: What are the most difficult parts of your life and how do you deal with those?

N: Trying to change the way I think about people, race, class, and gender. I have a lot of fixed and superstitious ideas about politics and how people should act. I'm looking at where I play a major part in continuing those social ills. That's difficult because I feel my ideas are cool and I should keep them, but that's not true. I'm finding it's more harmful to keep these ideas. That's really all I'm dealing with. I have a really nice job, I make a living, I have an affordable apartment and I have a great set of friends. So my support system is my set of friends and my spiritually.

L: How do you feel or what do you think about being in your twenties? Are you happy not to be a teenager anymore?

N: That I have a long life ahead of me. I'm grateful that I'm this young. I'm 25 and that's cool. I'm glad not to be a teenager. I didn't have a very good time then. I was confused, but those experiences were priceless because I wouldn't have what I have right now if I didn't have those experiences.

L: Is there a "best" and "worst" you can attribute to your age?

N: The best thing is ... I'm alive and awake and I'm aware, and I'm not depressed, and like checking into hospitals and stuff. The things in my life right now are only going to make my life better later. The only thing about being this young, and being young, and sort of young minded is that I am probably making a lot of mistakes that I am going to laugh at later. There really is no worse thing except I spent like two or three years of my early twenties not having enough fun and being miserable.

L: If you could tell teens and those 30 and up something important what would that be?

N: What I didn't know and I know now. Especially for teens who are queer and teens who are queer and of color, that's a really hard load to take on depending on how you were raised, and what your thinking patterns are. Especially to those teens ... there's really a whole big world out there and it really isn't as scary as it looks if one has the right attitude. Positive thinking is definitely a plus. For those 30 and up ... I hope that they are living life to the fullest because time's a tickin'.

L: Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?

N: Definitely self supportive. Producing my work and showing it. Hopefully I'll be in the middle of a very promising career. Living life as happy as I am right now.

L: What are some of the things you would like to see changed in the Les/bi/gay community in Chicago? What role do you see yourself playing in that?

N: I'd like to see us being more visible. I'm really looking for some community as a family thing. I'm not interested in letting everybody in the world know who I am because I don't care what they think as much. It's not about me trying to get somebody's approval anymore. I'm trying to get away from

that. I think we would have more joy there if it was less political. My role in that ... producing work [video and performance] that shows one

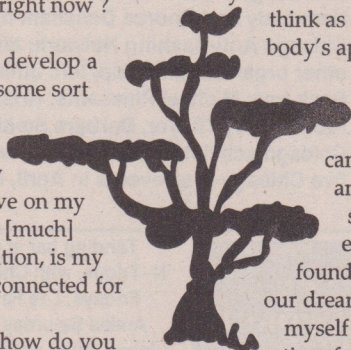
can be happy in their own skin no matter what anybody says or does. Throughout my almost seven years as a "Twentian," I've had many general conversations with my peers about life. I've found that a good number of us are in school to fulfill our dreams and working to pay our rent. Some like myself are even experiencing the joys and responsibilities of parenthood. We still have dreams. We've come

into this age carefree and we'll leave with our wrinkles and laugh lines of honor. Some of us are starting to plan our own retirement by seeking information on stocks, bonds, mutual funds, etc. We're beginning to define what we want in a lifemate, or decide if that's what we want at all. Most of us are looking for ways to be creative, active, women in our communities. We are generally a more mature group of twenty-year-olds than those of the past. One common theme is, "We don't miss our teenage years. The fun is just beginning." We're still happy and adventurous but wiser as well. On the idea of interacting with those 30 and older, our experiences vary. Some of us have been looked down upon and treated as if we were children. We have not been taken seriously and we have not been included in the evolution of our communities.

Some of us, however, have been seen for who we really are, mature, responsible beings in the world with a fair share of insight. At the Black Women's Expo this year, Sheryl Lee Ralph warned older women not to degrade or ignore our sisters in their twenties. She exclaimed that we are energetic, innovative, and exciting to be around. Yes we are all teachers and students.

▼▼▼

On a personal note, I would like to see more sisters honestly supporting one another. For example, only one social group that I called regarding this project responded ... one group. We can not advance at any age without trust and faith among ourselves. Yes we all make mistakes but please learn from them. If you would like to respond to this article, or would like to have your views on being twenty something heard, please write the managing editor.



Journey

by Donnyea Stokes

The journey that I travel is one of a long road and is far from over
 The journey that I travel I feel like no one knows.
 The journey that I travel I can hardly see
 The journey that I travel is carved deep inside of me
 The journey that I travel is tattooed deep in my chocolate skin
 and sometimes captures my mind and conquers my soul.
 The journey that I travel is the kind ...
 The kind you can't hold in your hands
 But wish you could touch.
 It's more like an emotion
 Something that overwhelms inside that you no you can never
 change
 but maybe
 one day you will see it in your eyes
 If you know it in your heart and believe it in your mind
 Then ...
 Just maybe
 You can travel this journey with me
 Than you will know how it feels
 Not to touch or see
 To be confused by the journey that goes on
 Inside of me.

Books for the shelf

by La Jaunessee Jordan

Bone Black: Memories of Girlhood is a new book by bell hooks. "It is the story of girlhood rebellion, of my struggle to create self and identity distinct from and yet inclusive of the world around me," hooks said. "Writing imagistically, I seek to conjure a rich magical world of southern Black culture that was sometimes paradisiacal and at other times terrifying. While the narrative of family life I share can be easily label dysfunctional, significantly that fact will never alter the magic and mystery that was present—all that was deeply life sustaining and life affirming. The beauty lies in the way it all comes together exposing and revealing the innerlife of a girl inventing herself—creating the foundation of self-hood and identity that will ultimately lead to the fulfillment of her true destiny—becoming a writer" ... "not enough is known about the experience of black girls in our society. Indeed, one of my favorite novels in the whole world is the *Bluest Eye*" by Toni Morrison. When the book was first published she explained that it was her desire to write about 'the people who in all literature who were peripheral—little black girls who were props, background; those people were never center stage and those people were me,'" bell hooks said. "This is autobiography as truth and myth—as poetic witness. ... laying out the groundwork of my early life like a crazy quilt, *Bone Black* brings together fragments to make a whole. Bits and pieces connect in a random and playfully irrational way. ... We look back as if we are standing at a distance. Examining life retrospectively we are there and not there, watching and watched. Evoking the mood and sensibility of moments, this is an autobiography of perception and ideas. The events described are always less significant than the impressions they leave on the mind and heart," hooks said of *Bone Black*.

The Little Things

by Dailyn Wilson

I love my woman 'cause her beautiful hair is long ...
 or short
 It's the way she elegantly throws it back
 or how she respectfully wears her hat

I love my woman 'cause the way she says *I love you*
 or the way she shows it
 "I love you baby" or when she gently rubs my feet
 That's the way we grow, that's how she loves me

I love my woman 'cause she holds me close even
 When she don't want none
 And it's the little things like that
 that make me want to give her some

I love my woman 'cause when I'm feeling down
 She gives me words of encouragement
 "Baby you can do anything you wanna do" she tells
 me and that's what helps me make it through

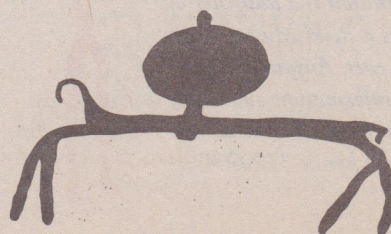
I love my woman 'cause when she walks by,
 Looking so sexy, and knows I'm watching, she'll put
 in the extra switch and booty shake for me
 Because she knows though I hate to see her go,
 I love to watch her leave

I love my woman 'cause when I f*** up royally and
 sincerely didn't mean it
 I don't run the risk of losing her
 because she loves me unconditionally
 She's gonna stand by me

I love my woman 'cause when we go out to eat
 She doesn't mind sharing her food with me
 We dip from the same sauce and eat from the same
 tender piece of meat

I love my woman 'cause when we're making
 passionate love
 The sounds of ecstasy she makes with me
 indicates to me that I'm doin' it her way
 Doin' the right things to make her scream and show
 me how very much she appreciates

All the things my woman does makes up what we share
 The love we share, those little things help put it there
 The little things are why we're able to say
 Lovely things at the end of a rainbow day.



Journeying Home

by M. Eliza Hamilton (Aboku Osun Ekeji)

From December 27, 1998 through February 20, 1999, I was the lead team teacher for Leg One of the Middle Passage Voyage captained by Bill Pinkney. Our goal: to retrace the route of the Middle Passage via boat and to communicate to schools and museums nationwide the impact that Africa and Africans had on the world. I started in Puerto Rico and ended in Brazil. In between, I traveled to places within mySelf (sic) that I can only speak about intermittently.

I have been back over a month now and I can tell you that my life has been changed forever. Everything I ever believed in was challenged by this trip. In the end, when all the publicity has died down and when I begin to write in detail about it, I will have lost quite a bit, including friends, family, and whatever illusions/strongholds I have gathered about mySelf to keep "me" together.

However, I will have gained just as much, especially a deeper knowledge and understanding of mySelf as an African-Caribbean woman. More than anything, this trip brought me face-to-face with those parts of mySelf that had been struggling to get out. The stories of the ancestors who are buried at the bottom of the ocean were given to me. Through them I began to see my present life more fully as a path of healing and change, a path that would have a profound effect on everything in my life once I returned to Chicago.

I am committed to sharing what was given to me while traveling for over a month on the Atlantic Ocean. I learned a great deal about sailing a 78-foot pilot house ketch, and I learned about trust and love. Finally, what I have always known was confirmed: as descendants of Africans, we are a powerful group who have yet to tap into the ancestral gifts that are ours for the asking.

The following prose poems

(*Keeping Watch: On Route to Brazil* and *Lessons in Sailing*, on the next page) speak to part of the experience that I had with Captain William Pinkney and with the ancestors.

M. Eliza Hamilton is a daughter of Osun. She is a Reiki Master, tarot reader, and poet. Anyone interested in more information about this voyage, or in need of services, should contact her at 312-664-4230.



'Billie'
by Juarez Hawkins



Keeping Watch: On Route to Brazil

by M. Eliza Hamilton (Aboku Osun Ekeji)

He tells me about the harness that shackles him to the vessel,
its high
quality nylon designed to keep him safe. How the sound like
heavy metal against

thunder recalls the lost memory of the collar that
choked him every time he breathed.

I want to tell him that the teak beneath my feet
lives even after cutting. How it
carried the root stories of oak and pecan, ebony
and baobab. For every naked inch of my
flesh that touches a plant, I mark my location with
grave sites not longitude.

I have known this since birth: I am the last one
left because centuries ago, the ship which
carried 425 of us arrived carrying only me. One
night I dare put one sole on deck, my own voice frightens
me as I sing the stories of people whose tongues have been
cut, but who insist on speaking.

He tells me the voices of children wake him at night. Their
laughter surrounds him.
Their tiny fingers pat him on the shoulder and rub his balding
head. Then they let the
waves carry them where he cannot follow and where I have
already gone.

They bang themselves against the hull of my bunk until I am
bruised by their urging that I am the vessel being carried. I
want to tell him about the screaming inside my head since
Barbados. Sister, they say, I have left my story here: under
your armpit, in your left eye. In your womb. Remember:
Memory is your gift to us. Remember the chains that bind
us, make us whole.

He tells me softly: You've not
had the benefit of night watch
when the ancestors walk above
deck. I laugh quietly and want
to tell him: It is not only above
deck that we walk. But I am
silent. One day, we will speak of
the things that haunt us.

for Captain Bill Pinkney

Greedy!

by Cathynn Joseph

They were full in my hand when I cupped them.
They were round and firm like a peach.
I didn't know that when I kissed them,
She would squeal and start to reach.

She told me that I should go lower,
So I slid my tongue down her side.
I lifted her legs on my shoulders
And spread her other peach open wide.

OOOH! you should've heard her moaning
When I slowly inserted by tongue
And rolled it around on her cherry
Licking inside her walls.
And when I inserted my finger,
Oh, you should have seen her crawl!

Shaking and jerking and bouncing
To the rhythm of my every thrust.
I loved how she screamed with excitement
When her climax started to burst.

I slowly pulled out my finger.
It was slippery, glistening, sore.
And before I could even taste it,
She started to beg for more.

Butch with a Purse

by Cathynn Joseph

Me, gay? Why would you say that?
Because you see me wearing baggy pants and a hat cocked
to the back?

So what if I wear blue jeans and plaid shirts
Rather than fishnets and tight skirts.
That doesn't necessarily mean I'm a ... LESBIAN!
See, there you go, stereotyping.

No! I don't think I walk too hard.
It's a comfortable stride
'Cause I don't wear shoes with heels too high.

My hair, natural, usually cut low.
Curling irons and all that styling's not for me.
I like to get up and go.

Sure, I admire women and their feminine ways.
When they walk ... those hips just sway.
That sexy crawl get me soooo dizzy.
But, I'm not gay!
Yet you call me butch anyway.

Can't you see I have a purse, a handbag ... whatever you
call it, it's here.
It rests snugly on my shoulder, packed with lipsticks and
eyeliners that I never wear.

Oh, and of course, a couple condoms, because I do sleep
with men.

So, don't bring up those women again.
I told you they were all just friends.
It was just a one ... two ... OK, three-time thing.
Crossing my fingers, it won't happen again.



by Juarez Hawkins

And still you don't believe I'm the feminine type?
I thought if the breasts don't convince you, then
the purse surely might.
But it's camouflage, you don't see it, you point
your finger and say "DYKE."

The more you say it the more I wonder, maybe
I'm the one who's blind.
Trying to hide my sexual preference.

By hanging a purse on my side.

Lessons in Sailing

by M. Eliza Hamilton (Aboku Osun Ekeji)

It all comes back to sex. Whether or not you've ever handled
a woman's body. Correctly.

There are ways. But old courtesans will tell that the only true
way is to enter the hold
and never look back. Once in, open each hatch until you
know what locks it, what springs it free.

Oh, yes, she will tell you in the middle of the night what
makes her creak, what makes her
moan; what makes her turn over like a puppy and yelp to be
rubbed just below her belly
in tight, soft circles.

But you have to listen. Your finger on her pulse, your toe at
the sole of her foot. Your ear near her mouth. Each sigh is
a separate language and if you are a good student
interpretation will be simultaneous. Your body will know
when and how to change its tack, and how to ride her to
get the most out of her breath.

And she will love you for it. Love you enough to open and
close herself around your fist
in ways you never dreamed.

Only then will you be able to guide her in the dark with your
eyes closed. Your fingers will know how to curve her
wettest scalding folds. Your tongue will know how deep to
taste the salt and cream spilling over her bow.

Only then will you recognize her thankful crying as the wind
whispering your name.

Walking and Entering with Dr. Gwendolyn Goldsby Grant by Rashad Burgess

"It is essential that non-gay Black people recognize and respect the hardships, the difficulties gay Black people experience, extending the love and understanding that is essential for the making of authentic Black community."—bell hooks

And I entered! As I walked through the lobby at the West Atlanta North to attend the 12th National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum Conference in February, I was simply awestruck by the presence of so many beautiful Black Same-Gendered Loving People. It was actually somewhat unusual for me to have such a strong emotional reaction because I have attended many conferences of these sorts, but somehow I felt spiritually uplifted or, better yet, revived by walking through the door. Maybe I had an inclination that this conference would have a lasting impact on my life.

I was excited that I would have a chance to fellowship with my brothers and sisters, as well as some of the great legends in our community. But also, I think I was more excited by the fact that some of our great allies would be doing the keynotes. Dr. Michael Eric Dyson and Dr. Gwendolyn Goldsby Grant were among the list of distinguished keynotes.

There is always something very exciting when our community, the same-gendered loving community, and our brothers and sisters of other sexual orientations, have a chance to dialogue, inspire and encourage one another. Dr. Grant has always been an ally and sees herself closely connected with us and is continuously on the battlefield combating homophobia, especially

within the Black community.

Dr. Grant, the "Sistah Psychologist," has a monthly advice column in *ESSENCE* MAGAZINE. In her column, "Between Us," she addresses issues from infidelity to abusive relationships to finding soulmates to coming out. In the May issue of *ESSENCE*, she will be responding to a young gay man who has low self-esteem. She has been on almost every talk show from *Oprah*, to *Ricky*, to *Geraldo*, discussing almost every ism and phobia that we, as Black folks, experience. Also, she is a wife, mother and a real advocate of the community.

The theme of her speech at the Leadership conference was coming to yourself. She outlined seven steps and principles that allow this to happen:

1. Learn to be with Yourself
2. Compliment Yourself
3. Empower Yourself
4. Forgive Yourself
5. Love Yourself
6. Claim Yourself
7. Celebrate Yourself

A critical point that she closed with was reminding us not to have a "Dot Sex Mentality," reducing our completeness to pieces and parts. She suggested that all of a person is sexual, as well as sensual.

After her energetic and uplifting address, the press had an opportunity to interview her. When we were at the table conducting the interview, I had a huge affinity and admiration for her. Although her presence is very commanding and she is always thinking on a very theoretical plain, at the same time she is very down to earth, referring to herself as the "soul psychologist." And truly she speaks from her heart and soul. All of her life she has been committed to helping our community deal with issues of sexuality. She stated that, "sex is where you speak from, [it is] who you are." Her understanding of sexuality and its role in human life is very encouraging. But also she has a phe-

nomenally deep spiritual belief system that is closely connected with her views about sexuality. Her spirit is driven by her belief that "the only thing between you and what you want is your mind." As I began to think about how so many of us have allowed *us* to defeat *us*, I wanted to scream, "That is it!" This is the ideology that will empower our community; this is how we will enter into the new millennium empowered.

Dr. Grant's words and image continually play through my mind. I find myself asking myself, "Do I see myself in fragments? Am I coming to myself?" As I entered this conference experience I did not expect for it to have such an impact on me by giving me some life-changing advice.

Entering into the next phases of our lives I hope and pray that we are all able to come to ourselves and enter as complete and whole persons.

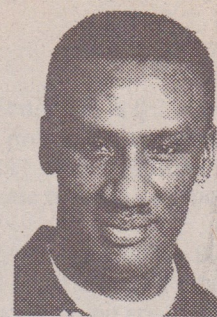
Finally, I offer thanks and prayers to those of us who are on the battlefield fighting homophobia, racism and other phobias and isms and I give special recognition to our allies who are also fighting this battle.

Burgess is Site Manager of Harambee Wellness Center of Howard Brown Health Center.

Brothers Committed to Living

by Lester Davis

The proud recipients of the Bayard Rustin Award for social organization of 1998 and 1999 are looking for brothers who are committed to living. If that's you, then take a ride on our BUS to help us brothers celebrate out 5th Annual Summer Retreat, July 8-11, 1999 at Camp Ronora in Watervliet, Mich. BUS gives strong, sincere support to African-American gay and bisexual men living with



HIV/AIDS.

Brothers United in Support (BUS) is a program of Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN), a non-profit AIDS service organization, located at 1258 W. Belmont.

TPAN is the Midwest's largest self-help organization for persons living with, or impacted by, HIV and AIDS.

Brothers United has enhanced the quality of lives of African-American bisexual and gay men to live with this disease and have a better outlook on life. BUS has been providing peer-led support, fellowship, education, and self-empowerment to its members and the community. Some of their services include weekly support group discussions, various social activities, and an annual weekend retreat for HIV+ men of African descent.

I began the idea of a BUS retreat in 1994. We focused on issues that we normally would not have time to talk about at our Thursday night drop-in, so we dedicate an entire weekend to nurture and support of one another. Workshops, Saturday night talent shows, canoeing, swimming, horseback riding, brotherly love and good fun are what we do at our retreats.

We feel as if we are our brothers' keeper. Why? Many people have died, because they have not been able to talk about what is going on with their own lives.

We show them that they are not in this by themselves.

For more information on our 5th Annual Summer Retreat, call (773) 404-TPAN. Call to reserve a seat for yourself on our BUS.

How I See It

Femmes, Stand and Be Counted

by C.C. Carter

Lately, I've been questioning about where I fit in this world and what part I play in the fight and struggles of the Lesbian movement. "You see, I'm a femme—a lipstick lesbian—a real girlie girl, so I can pass—smelling like a straight girl in my Victoria Secret satin panties—" from Stacey Ann Chin's 'Passing' poem. I recognize that my existence in this movement is almost nonexistent because often we—femmes—are silent; loving our butch women and letting them be the forerunners as well as the forebrunters of everything wonderful about lesbian life, and everything hateful that induces homophobia. We sit by passively watching and listening, but not speaking—making others in the straight world and even in our own mislabel us as submissive. Yet, lately I have been consciously taking notes, on myself that is. I have tuned into my body language, my thoughts, and my actions when my lover and I walk down the street passing by men watching us as we go. I grab her arm, I smile in her face, I kiss her cheek, she moves me to the inside and sticks out her chest. I've done my job well, I think to myself. I can't be silent anymore while my lover is on constant dyke watch lists.

I know that it is me next to her, that outs her to the world. She, when a one or with other friends like her, is a cute home girl that appears tomboyish. She is still considered attractive to men who refuse to see beyond the size 38C breasts she wears like armour. But me with her, reaffirms their suspicion that

she's a dyke, and I'm just her bisexual girlfriend that he could still have if I ever get tired of dealing with plastic, the fake stuff, and want the real thing. "My friend is in trouble—somebody takes the time to notice that the young boy is really a young girl, and the oversized red, white, and blue jacket is not enough to cover the tattoo on her belly—two naked women wrapped around each other like pretzels—It takes two minutes for them to break two ribs, she knows that butch bodies are too strong too strange too dark like the bronze bodies that smell too thickly of rebellions and revolutions." ('Passing'). He can't stand knowing that she does to me what he wants to do to me and I like it. I can no longer let her fight this war alone, when I am part of the cause.

I have begun to realize that there is power in my femmeness, that which I claim, that which I own, that which I am. My appearance is a sneak attack, making people drop their guards when they're next to me—leaving them targets for my words to put them in deep check when they slip and think that I am one of them. My definition of Femme is the appearance and mannerisms that one visibly associates with the actions and look of "ladylike" demeanors. The definition does not transcend into the bedroom analysis, because even in being Femme there are levels—Femme tops, strictly bottoms, Femme-butches, ultra Femmes, and the list goes on. Which brings me to how I see it. In late February, I went to the Outwrite Writer's Conference in Boston. Among the many workshops and panel discussions that I attended, I found the "Femme" panel most interesting. First of all, that

there was a need to even have a Femme panel sparked my initial curiosity. Second, that there were many people in the audience who really thought that Femme women had little effect on the Lesbian movements of the past and present. What did people think? That all those butch women in the public eye all slept with women like themselves? Which really made me think, what have I done lately to contribute to the movement? What have I done to increase visibility for women such as myself? Maybe our silence is the reason that it usually takes women like us more years, more divorced marriages, more domestic violence cases, before we acknowledge that we are lesbian. This may also be why more women resist the term Femme, because in the media, in the schools, in the job, in the neighborhood, where we usually are passing in silence, Femme means weak and frail. I knew at eleven that I liked women, but there were no visible role models who looked like me, acted like me, dressed like me whom I could talk to. Fifteen very volatile years later there I was bruised and scarred trying to start over, yet still never being visible just being the prize, the pedestal, the trophy. I never realized how important it is for Black lesbians to be seen and heard, especially Black Femmes until I went to Whitney Young's Pride Day event last year. As I walked into the room, and waited for the class to settle down, a young femme looking girl in the audience asked her teacher, "So where's our guest speaker, everyone else has one." I replied that I was the guest speaker, and she said, "You sure don't look like one." I had made a conscious effort to wear a dress

and pumps, with hair laid and face beat, because I knew that had I known at fifteen what I found out at twenty five, my life and agonies would have been different. For butch women it seems that their coming out experiences are a lot different. Usually through sports, or very similar interests/noninterests in males, they find each other early in life. There are more visible role models in the media for them, even if most of them are white. For femmes that never played sports, would never be caught climbing trees or getting in dirt, yet know intrinsically from that first boy kiss, that "something ain't right," what options do we have, and who do we turn to, except to put the blame on ourselves and try to assimilate as straight as possible. She (the young lady) came up to me afterwards and asked if she could be on my mailing list. Many other young ladies such as herself, also became very inquisitive after the group sessions. Two teachers said their classes specifically asked for me to come back. It was then that I knew that my silence was something that the future generations could not afford.

Yet, I constantly run into Femme women who when they speak in public, say, "Well I'm just a femme but —" There is no such thing as being "just" anything, especially Femme. We have just as much to say, and offer, and have many role models as those who aren't us. I don't condemn those who resist "labels," yet to deny that there is a privilege in the way Femme women experience the world because of the way we present ourselves to the world, is denying that there aren't certain ethnicities which enjoy privilege over

TURN TO NEXT PAGE

CC from 23

others. And if you can't deny the latter then you can't deny that Butch and Femme coexistence is prevalent in seven out of ten lesbian relationships. All over the country there is a rise in a new movement stirring—the Femme Movement. Conferences are addressing issues that pertain to Femme women and many self-help sister groups are adding Femme components to their agenda. I am ambivalent about all of this. I can't believe there are that many Femme women who don't know how powerful they are. That Self-Empowering The Femme workshops and panels are becoming necessary. Yet, I recently submitted my Dear Femme poem to an all-Butch anthology; it was accepted. That is until at the Outwrite Conference in the Femme panel (no doubt), the editor of the anthology met me for the first time and told me that Femmes could not be contributors to the book. This was after she had e-mailed me, when she thought I was Butch, for more poetry to include. I never told her I wasn't Butch, but her submission call never specified that you had to be Butch either. She told me I could be in the anthology if I interviewed my partner and phrased it in her words. So, yeah, I do see the need for a Femme movement in this case. Many times it is Butches who help silence the voices of Femmes. "Sit and be pretty." But often we silence ourselves, never in the limelight, never speaking unless spoken to, and always blending in with crowds—unnoticeable. So this is an all-call, to those who are women, and femme, and ready to be visible. Come to the front line ladies, show your face. You've got to be present and noticed to be counted. Some little cheerleader's life depends on it. Now I could be wrong, but that's how I see it.

A Black Lesbian and Politically Correct—Or am I?

by Sherri Jackson

I would like to think I am a Black, woman, lesbian, and politically correct most of the time. I try to be down for the cause on issues that have an impact on the Black community. So, how do you play that part when you are a mixture of Black, Cuban, Native American, French Creole, and White?

With the recent passing of my biological, eldest, brother who lived on the West Coast, some mysteries would be discovered. These discoveries would be left behind for me to find. The missing pieces I have searched for all my life. If you ever want a can of worms to be opened, and all the things you thought—let a death or birth take place!

The people in the family with the most silence, or who say they have no clue or say, "Baby I can't remember that," usually know all the dirt. Did I mention I was adopted? We were all split up at birth and placed on the auction block and distributed to so-called family members. Maybe this explains my fondness for community activism, especially around issues of women and youth. I was there to put my biological siblings. Next to us would stand a woman I had no clue about or a bond to. Only that she had lots of children, seven or more, and did not keep a one. I would flip through the pages of my brother's photo album (he, too, was gay) to discover a photo of a man who was my biological father. A very dark man with a mixture of Black and Cuban. Of course I was in shock, but not disbelief. Hell, I look at myself everyday in the mirror. I knew I was mixed with something. As I looked at this woman who was lighter than me, a mixture of Black, French Creole, and White, my bio mother, looking more white. I wondered how would my role in my community activism work change now? Or would that work remain focused only in the Black community? I had been raised Black. Not with

all the other colors that made me. Would I want to check the box marked "other" now? And what about the story I had just heard, that in my biological family we had a great-great-grandfather on my maternal side who was white and was a slave owner. Now I was pissed! I had flashbacks of visiting the South with my adoptive family. My adoptive father, being considered a dark hue, and my adoptive mother of light skin, we were always looked at weird upon our visits to the South. Black and White alike would stare at us and whisper. I recall my adoptive mother taking me with her the first time I was able to vote. Before we took this journey together she sat down with me and explained how Black folds were killed and also died for this right to vote. She would explain how women who have always been considered second-class citizens had to earn this right as well. I thought how was I going to act now toward my white brothers I hang out with and sit at the board tables with. Would I think everyone who is a white man like my great-great-grandfather capitalized off of my Black skin, and raped my many ancestors who were women, even more so now? How was I going to handle this so-called Thomas Jefferson Syndrome now? I wondered what the reaction from my Black brothers and sister would be if I chose not to sit at the table because all of me wasn't represented at that table. I could hear it now: "You must choose, Sherri. What color are you going to be?" What would I say to my many friends who are Latin and Native American if I wanted to sit at a table, but my skin would be considered too Black and I was too Black for them. So much flashed through my mind as I was looking at the unsolved pieces being unraveled.

I thought these are the pieces I have long searched for about me and I am sure I will discover more as time goes on. I recall still looking at the photo album of my now-deceased brother, and at a photo of a man I never had the chance to meet or know—my father. I was told he was killed. I would wonder many times

passing people on the street, was that my father? Who was I to believe? I wondered who was trying to protect who by keeping that part of me hidden? I was saddened and happy at once. I thought I would never say I wasn't a Black, woman, and lesbian. But, I also would not go into denial of those other parts about myself either. I would continue to work in the community as I feel I always have. I choose to work with everyone.

I am always reminded of the color of my Black and skin of many great colors when I am denied access for a promotion at work, or mistaken in my professional job in the healthcare field as the housekeeper or the folks that deliver the food. I am never the person that actually gives patient care. In doing my activism I am denied on occasion because I am simply a woman and lesbian. I sometimes cannot buy my way into the top to play the games we must play or choose not to play in this society.

I recall returning to Chicago after seeing my brother's ashes going to a better place. I thought he must have known all this time; he was just waiting for the right time, in his own time.

So, yes I will continue to work harder now and when I look in the mirror I will have to wear many hats now. But, I truly feel I always have. I will mesh these pieces together of my heritage and being taught the many struggles fought for. Maybe when someone asks me why I do the work I do in the community, now he will have some clue. But, I truly thought we did this work for personal, passionate reasons.

This story goes out to my many sister friends of darker and lighter hues who fight in the struggle of adversity and fight in the everyday struggles of being a female and/or lesbian. And this also goes out to those who are still searching for the missing pieces, like myself they were taken in by someone else either a biological family member or non-biological family member. Let us continue the struggles together across all lines, not just the color line but also class and sex.

Keep the faith. I did and I still do.

flow ~ notes from the BLACKLINES Music Department

Underground Techniques

DJ Harry T

Congratulations to Le Condo Club for being awarded "Club of the Year" at the



Ketty Awards which were held at the Baton Show Lounge. They have come a long way to bring the finest in Latin entertainment and you, the community have been the key to their success, for

which I say muchos gracias mi gente.

Summer has come upon us and the streets will be heating up with some new releases. Chicago's own Celeda will drop her debut album, *This Is It* and release the first single, "Be Yourself." Some great underground tracks have been released that should not be missed: the "Last Stop" ep from YMC, Johnny Fiasco gives

us another taste of his artistry by releasing "All Access 2." Phunky Data "Fashion" features the Ian Pooley mix but I think the flip is a much better floor filler. Don't miss the "Foreplay ep" with four hot different tracks out on Transmat records. Kevin Yost follows up from his previous single, "One Starry Night" to release "If She Only Knew." Also, check out his new release CD, *Small Town Underground*. For those who need a higher elevation to build to their groove, pick up "Body Rock" by MRE, "Baby Wants To Ride" by Hani and "The Musik" by Orange.

DJ Harry T Top 5

1. Muchacho - Da Cuban Heels
2. Wanna Give It Up - Ralphie Rosario feat. Linda Clifford
3. Turn Me On - Danny Tenaglia feat. Liz Torres
4. Discotek - Funky Green Dogs
5. If She Only Knew - Kevin Yost

I soul journal I by j.

| **Cree Summer - Street Faërie (Work)** | While Lauryn Hill continues to top the charts, it's easy to forget that the state of popular R&B is as stagnant as ever. Most people are unaware that for every Lauryn, Erykah and Maxwell, there are various other Black artists evolving the musical form. Some African Americans, when tired of the repetitive and narrow-minded lyrics of popular R&B turn to other forms of music, such as rock, alternative or country, generally not created by Black artists. Enter Cree Summer, whose debut has enough oomph! to make one forget she portrayed the clumsy Freddie on the sitcom *A Different World*. Co-written by Summer, *Street Faërie* delivers the spiritually conscious goods. Lenny Kravitz does an immaculate job of arranging, performing and producing the bulk of the music, shifting from folk and blues to rock and soul (sometimes all in one song). Cree's versatile voice, often delicate, sometimes strong or husky, phrases insightful, mystical lyrics with assured conviction. Tribal, personal and honest (she sings about her period on "Miss Moon" and asks a "Curious White Boy/when am I gonna meet your Mama/met yo Daddy already"), this collection is worthy of critical and popular praise. "Fall," "Mean Sleep" (a fab duet with Lenny Kravitz) and "Soul Sister" shouldn't be missed. Fav track "Deliciously Down" should have you humming the hook "I need high prayers to breath through/and I need to shine like I used to/and I know that I'm not supposed to be for nothing" after the first listening. | **Inner Shade - Four Corners (Rice)** | Bluey Maunick has assembled another group of musicians (ala Incognito) to deliver a flavor of jazz funk. Although, utilizing several contributors from Incognito, plus an assortment of other accomplished musicians, *Four Corners* offers few surprises. Arrangements are fairly straightforward and even vocalist Maysa Leak sounds a bit uninspired on these rehashed songs. "Mood To Mood" is one of the few highlights, a bossa nova track which mutates to drum n' bass without batting an eye. | **Les Nubians Show @ House of Blues** | The story goes that WGCI (home of bass check shout outs) really wanted an afrocetric and Bohemian crowd (y'know people who have actually bought the Princesses Nubiennes CD) to attend this promo concert. However, you get what you (don't) pay for: two slightly bewildered Black, French sistas singing to a DAT in front of industry and radio ticket winners. Keep an eye out for this duo's return (with full band) to be duly rewarded by their talent.

BOOKSHELF:

End of Innocence

by Robert Schultz

The End of Innocence: a journey into the life by Alaric Wendell Blair, Mirage Publishing, 1998, \$18.95, 249 pg.

Fitzgerald Washington's coming-of-age story found in Alaric Wendell Blair's debut novel, *The End of Innocence: a journey into the life*, is a hard-to-put-down tale that will resonate with readers seeking an Afro-centric coming-out story.

Fitzgerald Washington is a smart-mouthed precocious South Side of Chicago African-American youth traversing the difficult teen years. Novelist Blair's depiction of Fitzgerald Washington's path to adulthood is firmly set within an African-American environment that rings true. The author ably takes the reader along with Washington's journey to maturation. Washington is quite a queen, even before the character learns what that is, but Washington's journey shows that even a life-long queen can pledge a fraternity and enlist in the navy.

Blair's character, Washington, is ably crafted as a gifted youth that is both rebellious and driven. Blair's pacing is comfortable and the reader will certainly have more than one good laugh. The occasional sex scenes are brief yet sufficiently erotic. Best of all the naïve but equally worldly Fitzgerald's stumbling into the "gay life" of African-American men is realistically portrayed.

For some time, the number of books by and about Black gay men has been filling up the bookshelf. *The End of Innocence: a journey into the life* is certainly a great book to place on that bookshelf. Fitzgerald Washington's struggle to come to terms with his life, and to find a place in society, is warmly portrayed, providing a world-view that may be unfamiliar to many, but will endure this volume to the audience most familiar with the novel's milieu.

**Men's issue is coming in July ...
Deadline June 10.**

**Call (773) 871-7610, ask for
LaJaunessee's voice mail.**

Black Pearls

by Sukie de la Croix

Running for the 44th

"In 1980 I ran for office in the 44th Ward, and that was really a good experience that I really enjoyed, working to run as a candidate for public office. I had been a lieutenant on the alderman's campaign in 1980. We elected an independent who replaced Dick Simpson, and the guy we elected had a nervous breakdown in the first term of his year in office. The campaign committee came together and asked me to run. I ran against 'the machine,' against John Merlo, who was the Ward committee man before Bernie Hansen, and Bernie Hansen was a Ward superintendent and I was running as a candidate for alderman against Jane Byrne who was Mayor, and John Merlo who was running for alderman. I won 20 percent of the

vote in 1980. Black, gay, and I was out and I had the gay paper endorsement, but it was just a very quick special election, it happened in three months. We had to go to court to demand an election and we won. And then we had three months to run a campaign, and



The July 8, 1977 GAYLIFE newspaper had a news item on the first openly gay member of the Belmont Harbors Neighbors Association. David Ferrell, an active member of the Gay Rights Task Force, was elected to the Belmont board. It's a civic group concerned with the area bounded by Addison and Belmont, the Lake and Halsted. It is a member of the Lakeview Citizens Council.

with only three months, and not enough preparation, I did not win the election, but winning 20 percent as a very young, gay, Black man on the northside was pretty good." — Michael Harrington

Men of All Colors

"When I first joined the group ... we've been Men of All Colors Together now for about ten years, but before that we were Black and White Men Together. I knew about the group from back when it started in 1980. At the time I was in a relationship and I just perceived the group as a place where Black men could meet white men, and white men could meet Black men. After my relationship ended I thought, 'Well let me check this group out.' That was in about '85 when I first checked the group out, and I've been involved full-time ever since." — Les

Mattachine Midwest ...

"I'm a past president of Mattachine Midwest. It was in the early '70s. Tom Gertz was the president when I joined. He's back in Chicago now. Mattachine was the only ... well, I won't say 'only' as there

was one other organization around at that time called ONE ... but Mattachine had a newsletter and it had a hotline, it had the only newspaper in Chicago, and that was before WINDY CITY TIMES, and GAY CHICAGO, and OUTLINES. I'm not exactly sure whether I read

about Mattachine somewhere or I knew another member who invited to me to join. I do remember I used another name, everybody did. I used the name Ralph. There's still one person who knows me as Ralph when he sees me on the street ... (laughs) ..." — Ed

Mark III ...

"So here I am in college in '69 with a white friend of mine, Peggy, a hippie looking girl like me, and we go to the bar. Heavy duty butch stud. Ladies and Studs, and we've got on jeans, and we're like our regular hippie selves. She falls for this attractive young Black woman there who was a Lady. She goes over and starts dancing with her, and all of a sudden her Stud comes over to us, 'What the hell do you two think you're doing?' I said, 'Oh my friend is just trying to be nice and dance with your friend.' She said, 'You and your white friend better get the hell out of here.' Next thing I know we are running down Cottage Grove heading for Hyde Park. But Peggy got the girl's phone number ..." — Vernita Gray

Snippets ...

In the 1961 movie *Raisin In*

The Sun, starring Sidney Poitier and Claudia McNeil, there are a couple of scenes filmed in a bar. The bar used was the Kitty Kat Club—it's a rare chance to see an old Black gay bar. The play *Raisin In The Sun* was written by Chicago-born Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965), who was believed to be a lesbian or bisexual. The play won the New York Drama Circle Award, a first for an African-American. It also marked the first time a Black woman had a play produced on Broadway.

On April 18, 1970, the U of Chicago Gay Alliance held its third Chicago Liberation dance, the first off-campus, at the Coliseum on South Wabash. The University had thought that the dances on-campus were getting too big and were attracting too many non-University people. Insurance was obtained at the last moment by the contribution of a Black insurance executive. Expected raids did not materialize. The appropriate and fitting nature of holding the dance at the Coliseum, scene of so many drag and masquerade balls in the 1920s and 1930s, was not noted at the time. Does anyone know who this Black insurance executive was?

Famous Black lesbian bar Maxine's (also known as the Boulevard Room) on Jeffrey near 71st Street was raided by Chicago police early in March 1968. All of the patrons were arrested, taken to police headquarters at 12th and State, and charged with being inmates of a disorderly house.

Help me educate young gay people about our unwritten history. You can be anonymous.

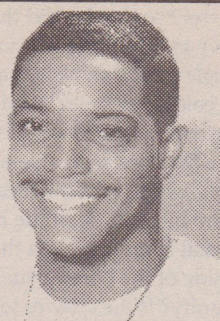
Send your stories to Sukie de la Croix at BLACKLINES. He also interviews over the phone or by e-mail sukie@wwa.com

Jamaica news

The Jamaica Forum of Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays notes with interest some of the conditions attached to the decision of the United Kingdom to grant British citizenship to nationals of its dependent territories in the Caribbean. Especially noteworthy is the condition that the territories will be required to repeal their laws prohibiting certain homosexual acts. The Jamaican government has made it clear that the country will not change its laws regarding certain homosexual acts. J-FLAG cautions that such hard-line positions are untenable in a world of increased interdependence among nations. Call 876-978-1954 or village.fortunecity.com/garland/704

COMING OUT OF DARKNESS:

**Progress Notes Part II
by Sanford E.
Gaylord**



In part I of Progress Notes (April BLACKLINES), I wrote about my follow-up visit with my doctor and our discussion about the casualties of my war with HIV. My results revealed that my CD4/T-Cell count was higher than it had ever been and my Viral Load (level of virus in the blood stream) was undetectable. At the end of the visit I was re-tested to confirm my HIV status.

I was haunted with the thought of what it would be to not be HIV+. Nearly a decade has passed since that August evening when I received a phone call informing me of my diagnosis and I became Haunted by Mr. Death. It has been a very long journey rebuilding my life after self-destructing and trying my best to make a positive life after testing positive for HIV. Choosing to fight HIV by claiming life after diagnosis has helped me to come out of

a great deal of darkness.

Although I was re-tested for HIV because of those favorable results it was done in part because my medical records still hadn't arrived at my new doctor's office. He informed me during that last visit that I shouldn't get my hopes up because the results could come back positive but for now the casualties of war were in my favor and not HIV's. I kept what he said in mind after leaving his office but I couldn't stop thinking what it would mean if I weren't HIV+. In the week's time before I received the results I went back inside of myself in search for answers.

I told a couple of friends about the results of my latest visit and they were just as amazed as I was about my good news and health, espe-

cially my mother. She and I have developed a stronger bond and friendship since my father's transition. My mother asked me "what I would do if the results revealed that I weren't HIV+; have you ever prayed to God to remove the virus from your body?" There was a long pause before I answered. I had to go inside of myself to answer the question. I had to admit to her and myself that I had never prayed to have HIV removed from my body; I had no idea what I would do if the results came back negative. I continued by saying that I know that I probably wouldn't be here if I hadn't tested positive because it helped me to focus and fight to make all my dreams become realities as well as setting new goals.

Flashing back, I told my mother that this has happened before. I've had a high CD4 count and undetectable Viral Load without the therapeutic armamentarium that I now take. It was only after my count had dropped and Viral Load had skyrocketed in my seventh year without meds that I decided that I should take them. It took another

year to actually start what would become a daily ritual for the rest of my life or until there's a cure for HIV/AIDS—and we still are nowhere close to the cure.

Results from my CD4 count and Viral Load have been at their best when I am happy and doing the things that enrich my life both mentally and spiritually. Being a performance artist and writer are dreams fulfilled. They are my way of giving back to the universe and my blessings have been bountiful. I finally found faith after a serious search inside of myself last summer with the Adodi retreat. I have become more in touch with my spirit because I am able to pray to God at night and ask to be made more of a miracle than I am. Having a safe space to give thanks to God, at Church of the Open Door, has only enriched my spirit because I'm around other same-gender-loving brotha's and sista's who look and talk like me. I know these things have had to help me stay healthy and be the miracle that I am.

A week later I received my results from the blood draw. I was informed that I was still HIV+ but that I have highly controlled virus in my system. The enemy, HIV, has been contained but not removed.

HIV is still present in my lymphatic system and all the tissues of my body.

I look at it as a good thing. Adhering to the strict dosing regimen of my meds has helped dramatically. Becoming more in touch with my own spirit and relationship with God has helped heal many of the scars that I have inside.

My journey, my war is far from over. There is a lot of work to be done.

Thank-you Moma for helping me in my search. I love you.

briefly ...

Memorial Day Weekend is fast approaching and the 9th Annual Black Lesbian and Gay Family Day Picnic will be the highlight of the weekend. This annual event will be held May 31, 1999 at Lots 23&24, Rock Creek Park, Washington, D.C. from 10 a.m. until dusk. "We would like to take this opportunity to invite you and yours to the picnic," organizers said. For further information, visit their website at <http://www.security911.com> or email BPicnic99@aol.com.

The 2nd Annual BGC (Black Gay & Lesbian Cruise) will cruise a week before the 11th Annual ATB Malibu Beach Party. The BGC Cruise will feature Moonlight Dancing 'til dawn (with their own DJ), a Cock N Tail Party, exotic dancers and the Annual Talent Show. The Ship will depart The Port of Los Angeles and sail away for four cool days and four hot nights to Catalina Island and

Ensenada Mexico. Call 1-888-922-2916 or email us at www.songmaster1.com.

Reva Thomas, a Ph.D. student at the California School of Professional Psychology in Alameda, CA, is writing her Ph.D. dissertation on the psycho-social development of African-American women, and in particular her study focuses on African-Americans who were teen mothers, received AFDC, earned professional degrees, and now have professional careers. Send suggestions to her at Rreva@aol.com

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See page 3 for info.

GURLLLology 101 thru 401 Academic Networking by Vicky Nabors

What up folks! Spring is in the air and I am feeling a sense of mental and spiritual awakening. This has caused me to visit a peculiar and strange side of my brain cells (chuckle). For real though! I've experienced lots of thoughts on various aspects of my existence and other issues that piss me off (see what I mean). So, I decided to share them with you in a question format. First, why do people invite you over to their homes for dinner and ask you to bring the meal? And, why does Ms. Butterworth syrup only talk to children? Why do we have to experience the



pathetic rebuilding of the once magnificent Chicago Bulls? And, does anyone else feel the pain of each defeat like I do? When will parents really understand? Hey! Why did mom make me wear ugly dresses during my teen years? And, why did she force me to go to church every Sunday, wearing uncomfortable/ugly heels and stockings that always seemed to run before I left the house? (I looked like a drag queen—too butch.) Do you believe in God or a Higher

Power? And, why did they have to take my gurls on *Living Single* off the air? What about us colored peoples? And, on the real tip gurls, what is a STUD? Does such a personality truly exist, or is it a facade? Is there life outside of the homosexual community? Is there life inside of the homosexual community? If the answer to both of these questions is yes, then can they be intertwined in an individual's life—balanced? Hey! Whatever happened to the Uga Chagga Dancing Baby? And, will someone pop a cap on that Taco Bell mutt? Speaking of death, why did my daddy have to die? Have you ever thought about truth and reality? What is your truth, your reality and what is it based on? Is it true that 'the more things change, the more they stay the same?' Will we

ever be free? Black womyn—will we?

OK, I feel much better now that I've released that internal pressure, so, on to my guest writer. Yvette speaks to us again.

Hey! It took me six months to get the nerve to finally go to a gay club. Why, you ask? Well, when I finally decided that I was a lesbian, I wanted to meet some people like me. The only way I knew how to do that was going to a gay club. The problem was that the club was basically on my college campus. Yep, I was scared to go because I didn't want my sorors or peers to know that I was gay. I also didn't want to be known as the Gay member of XYZ sorority. So every weekend, I would drive to the club and just sit in my car and watch the people go in and out. By doing this not only was

In the Raw

d.I. sanders

Two men are having sex; one or both of them are HIV positive. There is not a condom in sight. Instead, semen is being shot inside the anal cavity and bodily fluids are oozing down their throats. No one is alarmed. They both appear to be at ease, relaxed. Does this image bother you? Should it bother you? I can't answer that for you. When I set out to write this piece, I was writing a Baptist hellfire condemnation of barebacking. Then I took a real look inside myself and tried to see—well at least tried to figure out—the mentality or the thrill for those who choose to bareback. Yes, it is a choice and it is the option taken more often than you might want to believe.

What concerns me is that our community is embracing this notion of barebacking. One of the big ways is by giving it such a trendy name such as "barebacking" and not calling it what it really is: unsafe, destructive sex. At a



recent roundtable, one lesbian voiced her anger over the unsafe sex trend. I'll paraphrase.

"We (meaning lesbians) watched and leant our support in the 80s and early '90s while this disease ravaged the gay male community. We won't be there this time while you purposely do this to yourselves." Can't you understand this frustration? I know I can. But it goes a lot deeper than that.

I have never had unprotected penetrative sex, unless you count oral sex. I have made sure that I do not take in others' bodily fluids. I have had the desire to see what it is like to have unprotected sex. I have always believed, when there is a cure for HIV or when I have met the person of my dreams and we did the test, maybe then I would try it. For me, hearing countless friends talk about their friends who have passed on because of HIV infection has been enough to keep me practicing

safe sex. I have not had a single friend die of HIV. I didn't think I would even have a conversation about having unprotected sex, until recently. I was amazed at how many people who I figured would never even think about it, were actually having unprotected sex. I heard reasons from they wanted to see how it felt to it was with someone they trusted and loved (most of this group hadn't been seeing that person for longer than six months).

What I heard the most was that exchanging bodily fluids was a spiritual event that made the sex even better.

Recently, my first and only love asked me about unprotected sex. As we talked I realized that neither of us had ever had unprotected sex. We're a year apart and our experiences are pretty similar. I listened to him talk about how he would like to experience this with me together. We love each other. He laid out a plan, we would go get tested and not have sex with anyone

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I checking out the scene of the club, I was also able to see if anyone I knew from the College was anywhere around. So for those six months, I just weighed my options. Before you knew it, December had come and I was graduating. By this time, I knew that I had nothing to lose. So a week before I was graduating, I went to that club and stood on the wall the whole time. I realized there was nothing to be afraid of. I figured if I saw any of my classmates there, that only meant one thing, they were gay. So I graduated and I became a regular at the club. I met a few people, but I never really dated anyone that I met because I really just wanted to be friends. Have any of you sistas found it difficult to enter a gay establishment that was on or near your campus? Have any of you been scared to join an organizations that was for gays and lesbians and if so, How did you handle it?

Replies to vnabors@neiu.edu or Lambda Publications, (BLACKLINES), Vicky Nabors, 1115 W. Belmont, Suite 2-D, Chicago, IL 60657

Leather Scene

by Cain Berlinger

Well, its that time of year again and International Mr. leather is just a few weeks away (Memorial Weekend in Chicago) and all over the country, wherever there's a platform, someone is holding a Leather title Contest. To the uninitiated these contests are simply beauty pageants and are often seen as simple entertainment. The truth of the matter is that these contests have become a major source of leather pride in the fact that it is the largest philanthropic arm of the Leather Community. It is not about the biggest pecs but a selection of the man/woman most equipped to handle the outreach required. They should look presentable and have a sense of themselves, their community and be willing to put themselves on the line to protect their rights and the communities they live in to live their lives as free and open as their sexuality allows and at the same time educate the public and provide valuable funding to organizations from AIDS causes to Toys for Tots.

What has this to do with the Black Community? Fewer contests have generated as much controversy as the Mr. Ebony Leather Contest held during International Mr. Leather Weekend. It is the only contest in this country that is open to People of Color exclusively. Contrary to popular belief it is open to ALL people of color including Latinos, Asians, Indians and other disenfranchised groups.

I recently had this letter forwarded to me from the West coast: a white gay male wrote in a letter commenting on "... why is it necessary for blacks to have their own titled contests, and clubs, etc. ... when clearly there has been black title holders." (He mentions Dee Cannon and the current Mr. Gay 1999.) He continued on by saying the gay commu-



nity has grown much too sensitivity (sic) to race and prejudice, and white men are becoming extinct. With all this reverse discrimination and separate black events" — he proposes white gay men contests and titles should be for only gay WHITE MEN.

A female spokesperson for the San Diego leather Community shares this view with me "... this is the same mindset of Northern California men regarding the MR. EBONY CONTEST when it was held in San Francisco. There seems to be a distinct threat to white men, regardless of how liberal they profess to be—when it comes to black folk wanting something separate from them. As in another case of a leather event held last year in San Diego. Out of 30 listed workshops, there was only one dealing with POC issues. The explanation given was that, the majority of gays don't like controversy nor rivalry. Many do not want to be embroiled in "separatist" issues, but will totally espouse to having separate male only clubs, play parties and spaces. Now it seems to be more prevalent, many are denouncing anything that enlists minorities as a separate entity under the larger umbrella which they represent? Why?"

It's no longer about 'our own' it's about representation. Do these same opponents of Black-only events make the same argument about St. Patrick's day being only for the Irish, or any parade that celebrates a group of people who share a heritage and a pride about who they are? In nine

months it'll be a new century. Are we to carry over the same tired prejudices, or are Black men finally going to take center stage and chart their own destiny without waiting for the approval of whites.

Send comments suggestions to writercain@aol.com

THY CUP RUNNETH OVER

International Mr.

Leather '99

by Lynnell
Stephani Long

Once again, it's time for the leather community to dust off the chaps, vest and boots, and head to the Congress Hotel for the 1999 IML Contest. Last year, for the first time ever, IML welcomed a Female-to-Male transexual contestant. Just goes to show when you get a bunch a people together with different kinks, there are no freaks.

If you are considering going to IML this year, then do it! Most of the parties surrounding IML are pansexual. Meaning even if you are a Black Intersex Leather Dyke like me, you can still attend. The leather market is great, bring lots of cash. The leather market is full of vendors from around the world. Even if you're a novice, there's something for everyone. If you do decide to attend IML this year, all you need to fit in is Levi's, a leather vest and leather boots. Gym shoes and leather do not go together, sorry.

Also, the notion that leather accompanies S/M is not true. You can be into leather without being into S/M. Not everyone likes to be pinched, paddled, pierced, tied down or strung up, just those of us that are kinky. The idea is to have fun. Whatever you do, don't forget to breathe.

Dawn of a New Woman

After two years of procrastination, and a crashed computer, I have finally finished my poetry book entitled, *Dawn of a New Woman*. It wasn't easy



going through every poem, prose and play I've ever written. I had to deal with the emotions that accompany each poem, each relationship and a lot of events that happened in my life. As I revised most of my writings, it was like revising my life. Constantly thinking about lost love and friends. It helped me to look at myself and see how much I've matured in the past three years. I realize one of the reasons I still write for BLACKLINES, after I considered quitting and living a normal life, is because I still remember what it felt like not to have a role model when I was young. It was a dreadful feeling to feel like no one in the world understood my gender dysphoria. Today, I am proud to see the many LesBiGayTrans role models there are for the younger generation. Maybe, just maybe, it will help them to realize they are not alone. It's important for me to remember that there must be a Trans/Intersex voice in BLACKLINES. No matter how bad "I" think my life may seem, life can be worse for a teenager.

Just for Today

I love this time of year when flowers are blooming, trees are beginning to sprout leaves and the grass is green again. The warm air creeps over and warms Chicago like a blanket. I open the windows in my apartment to allow the smell of spring to cleanse the rooms where I have hibernated this past winter. Seasons change, people change, and yet the smell of spring reminds me that

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What's The "411"

with Preston L. Shumaker
Smart Advice
with an attitude!



The Body Beautiful

Spring is pouncing upon us! As the sun's rays shimmer warmly against our bodies and cool breezes foreshadow the upcoming summer festivities, the desire to shed pounds is brought forth. Seemingly overnight, the local bike pathways, gyms and even the Chicago Lakefront trailways undergo a drastic metamorphosis. Once again, these locales become swamped with body-conscious individuals ... until the bad snowy weather hits. Then, in a flash: SWOOP!! They were gone just like the New Year's resolutions and promises that were made in January. Question: Where were y'all hiding all winter? "GIRL, cold weather isn't chic nor cute!" remarked a young man to one of his friends at the gym. Yes, indeed readers, some of us have been hibernating all winter only to realize the snow is gone but the pounds are still there from Thanksgiving and Christmas Festivities!! In fact, new pounds may have even shown up to join in the party! "Why me?" some of us wonder. "I didn't eat that much

over the holidays? What should I do? I don't have much time to commit to a daily work-out regime!"

Have you found yourself in this common predicament? Let's examine some possibilities. However, before we ponder exercise regimens, let's take a look inward at some of the reasons why you wish to work out in the first place. Could it be many of us feel working out can provide a healthier alternative for our hearts, minds and souls? Or, could it be that the American phenomenon proclaiming 'Thin is IN' or 'Masculinity means MUSCLES' has taken its toll on us? In addition, the latter ideology has had a tremendous trickle-down effect within the GLBT community to have that perfect body. After all, the media continues to saturate hungry images of lean muscular builds and/or flat, washboard abs. If you look around the community, these buff images permeate within all the magazines, television sets, our buildboards and maybe even our fantasies. Ultimately, the pressure to look a certain way can make us feel unattractive resulting into poor self-esteem

about our bodies. In my opinion, our bodies in all their various colors, shapes and sizes are beautiful. They are what make us unique individuals. So, if you like your size and shape, cool!

However, let me be clear: I'm certainly not anti-exercise. Actually, I'm saying quite the opposite. Your personal health should always be taken into consideration. Daily exercise can provide a healthy outlet for stress and hypertension reduction among other ailments. However, the way a person chooses to exercise is the key. Like many things in America, there are many quick schemes on the market that make false promises. Many of us can be lured into believing this is the way to get the perfect body more rapidly. After all, QUICKER IS BETTER, RIGHT? WRONG! Unfortunately, the exercise industry is a billion-dollar institution. It, too, feeds and festers due to naivete and continues to thrive because of this factor! Some products such as steroids, certain diet pills/protein drinks, and over using vitamins can be toxic to the body. If taken in excessive amounts for an extended timeframe, these products could have damaging physical side effects!

But, for those who are contemplating an exercise program, while a positive attitude is important, do your homework! It's always a good idea to have a complete physical with your physician. Discuss the possibility of a regular exercise program with him/her. After this process and everything checks out,

you are ready to begin! If you can afford to, I highly recommend seeking a trainer at a gym. Many fitness centers have very good trainers that can teach you the ropes regarding cardiovascular and weight training regimens, as well as proper diet. It is a new way of life in terms of how you treat your body. The good news is YOU can accomplish this task in a healthy way!! More importantly, by having a trainer (at least in the beginning) you won't be fooled and lured into buying fly-by-night portions and drinks!!

In about ten weeks, you will begin to feel better and quite possibly begin to see results for yourself. But you have to commit to the necessary work it takes to whip yourselves back into shape!! You won't be sorry. I, too, workout on a consistent basis. However, I have been doing so for several years, supplement free! In addition, I have obtained other qualities through daily exercise such as more energy throughout the day, more vitality, and definitely more discipline.

After all, discipline is key to achieving the desired effects and goals. Those snow-filled wintry days have yet to stop me from exercising. You, too, can accomplish beating the winter hulk by going to the gym in those months!! And finally, the discipline does transfer over into other areas of your life. Like everything else in life, if you invest the essential time in an exercise regimen, you will see that your investment will not only mature but you will feel great!! Take it from someone who knows.

Until the next time, your body beautiful awaits you but remember: TO THY OWN SELF BE TRUE! As always, Peace and Blessings, readers.

Comments? Questions? I eagerly want to hear from you. Send me an e-mail: PrestonMSW@aol.com.

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HELP WANTED

COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATOR (PART-TIME) HOWARD BROWN HEALTH CENTER, the Midwest's leading gay, lesbian, and bisexual health center, is seeking a Community Health Educator to provide health education and outreach services in the women's community, focusing on women who have sex with women. Req's: Minimum of two years experience working in the health and/or social services field. BA in health education or social services or equivalent experience. Strong written and verbal communication skills required. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with diverse staff and client population. To apply: send resume to **C. Reid, Director of Human Resources, 4025 N. Sheridan Rd., Chicago, IL 60613, e-mail: courtneyr@howardbrown.org or FAX (773) 388-8887.** No calls please. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. EOE. (4/99)

FAMILY MATTERS, an award-winning, life affirming, family and community focused organization, is seeking a Director for our teen girls program. We offer a positive and supportive work environment to someone with 3-5 years' experience working with teen girls and their families. Program seeks

to address emotional, spiritual and physical health needs of participants and includes mentoring, policy and community

service components. Salary is competitive and benefits are excellent. Please send resume to **Kim DeLong, Executive Director, 1512 W. Juneway Terrace, Chicago 60626** or fax resume to 773-338-6335. (4/99)

DPG, Inc. & P.H.A.T. (Plenty of Hips Ass & Tits) are hiring. This Plus Size (& Medium Build) Bi-Sexual Female Erotic Dance Group needs topless waitresses & dancers. Serious only 1-800-997-0447. High self-esteem. (4/99)

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BAD, BOLD, AND BLACK: For sampler set (8 men, 8 photos), send age (21+), signature, \$10, to Zebra Studios, P.O. Box 138271, Chicago, IL 60613. (Potential models welcome!). (2/00)

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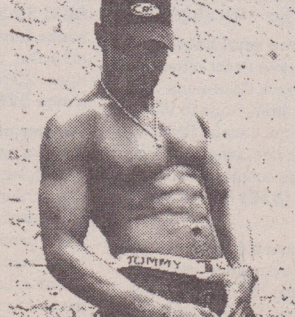
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WhuzzUp this week in D.C.? Men's Event & Info Line in the Black Gay Capitol: 1-900-963-0230 (\$1.95 per min). *** ALSO TRY MALE-BOX MAGAZINE: The Intimate Opinions, Experiences & Emotions of Black Gay Men \$24/12 issues (hdcp only). Malebox2@aol.com

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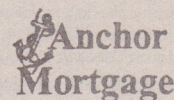
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PERSONALS



Those who have **VOICE** following their printed introductions have also left recorded introductions. Dial 1 (900) 454-0101.

To keep your free voice box active continuously, you need only continue checking weekly. As long as your box remains active, new respondents using the Browse option, and seeking your profile traits, will be able leave messages.

WARNINGS: 1. We no longer accept for print home phone numbers or addresses. **2.** Vice officers sometimes respond to suspect ads in an effort to uncover illegal activity. Note: sex-for-money agreements (even if no sex occurs) are illegal.

CODE: ISO = In Search Of

Men

Sex, romance, hot top 5'9", 155#, 25 y/o. Bi BM military discreet seeks slim/skinny bottom any race under 37 y/o Page **Leo (312) 216-9101 (7)**

PGBM, 5'11", 185#, 48 y/o, HIV+, alcohol/drug/smoke free, bald, pierced ears, religious, uninhibited, ISO meaningful LTR, similar. **NL Box 423 (7)**

I know you're out there. I'm looking to meet the most huge cummers in Chicago; it's my fetish. A plus for Blacks and Hispanics, especially Puerto Ricans. Me: Latino, very passionate, hairy. I won't disappoint you. **NL425**

Very attractive SGM, 38, successful, easy going, romantic and fun. Fuiero encontrar un hombre latino especial para una amistad o para una relación amorosa. Yo apreciaría una foto si es posible. Respond to **LPS, 6311 Fairview Ave., Suite 145, Westmont. IL 60559 (7)**

Dominant SBM NYC, mature honest, atheist, strict master, sane, friendly, seeks Black/Latina submissive female 24+ to serve me. NYC nearby. (No phonies, D/D, smokers.) Maids, rollerbladers welcome! Photo, phone. **NLBox 429 (8)**

Bottom GBM lover wanted: GWM 48 (boyish looking), 5'10", 190#, seeks healthy younger bottom GBM 21-33 who's smooth and cut for long term relationship. Write Tom. **NL419 (5)**

Transvestite queen, ISO friend, roommate, travel partner, horny, dominate no drugs/hangups, any age/color. Me: bottom only. **NLBox411 (5)**

I'm looking for my fetish Iranian Pakistanian man, the most hairy. A plus for mustaches, hung, heavy cummers. I won't disappoint you. Me: Latino. **NL 409 (5)**

GWM 50's ISO LTR with Caribbean male. Am HIV-, DDfree, NS. Prefer a loving top, am a loving bottom. **NL 383 (5)**

Professional, adventurous romantic seeks LTR with 30-45 GM who enjoys spontaneous times and quiet romance at home. Me: GWM 37, brown/hazel, attractive, creative, likes to have fun. No smokers, drugs or barflies. **NL 401 (5)**

Still looking for mature gentleman any race. HIV- regular sexual companionship, your race. Me: White bottom 5'8" no bullshit. **VM (773) 995-4091 (5)**

Water sports bottom wanted by 55, 6', 165# top in good shape. Send phone, info and

Personals

How to place an ad:

- The first 20 words are free; each additional word is 25¢. Ads run 2 Months. ADS ARE FOR ONE-ON-ONE MATCHES. Groups wishing to place ads in personals can do so at CLASSIFIED rates (\$10/30 words for 1 month, 3 months \$27).
- In addition to your ad, send your name, address, home phone & signature.
- You will be assigned a free voice-mailbox number, unless you specify you do not want one. You can record a voice-mail message for free; retrieving messages costs \$1.79 per minute. Upon receipt of your ad, we will send

your voice-mailbox code and info on how to use the system.

- You can rent BLACKLINES mailbox/\$6 per month, if you wish to have written responses forwarded to you; we send them out once a week. (If you have your own PO Box, voice mail #, e-mail or beeper #, we request \$5 per 2 months. We DO NOT accept ads with home address/phone)
- Deadline is 10th of each month for next BLACKLines. You can also run in Nightlines and Outlines and En La Vida.

How to respond to an ad:

- If an ad ends with an NL/V #, you can reply by mail or by phone to that ad (some ads will list an address + a voice-mail # in parentheses—either send your reply to the address as it appears or reply by voice-mail).

ses—either send your reply to the address as it appears or reply by voice-mail).

- If ad ends with NL BOX #, you can only reply by mail. If it ends with Voice #, you can only reply by phone (written replies will not be forwarded).

- To respond in writing, send letter to the NL/V # or NL BOX # specified at the end of the ad, c/o BLACKLINES, 1115 W. Belmont, 2-D, Chgo, IL 60657. Respond to all others ads as specified at the end of the ad.

- To leave a voice-mail message (\$1.79/min.), use touchtone phone to call 1-900-454-0101. Punch 1 & 5-digit NL/V # or NL Voice # to respond to that ad — or punch 2 to listen to people's voice-mail messages.

(773) 871-7610 (Tuesdays 9-5 only)

Ad should read

Please also run ad in (no extra money): ☐ Outlines ☐ Nightlines ☐ En La Vida
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Signature: _____

Cost of the ad:

1st 20 words, 2 months	FREE
Additional words 25¢ ea.	\$ _____
MailBox # (\$6 per month)	\$ _____
Use own PO/Beeper/VM/e-mail, \$5	\$ _____
Total Amount Enclosed:	\$ _____
Send to: BLACKLines/Outlines, 1115 W. Belmont, Suite 2-D, Chicago, IL 60657	

fantasies. **NL 299 (5)**

Top handsome masculine 6", 178#, 51 y/o GBM seeks a goodlooking, well built, good natured, masculine, clean, submissive bottom, employed, trusting and quality GBM for a relationship. A social drinker OK, no drugs. No games please. **NLBox397 (5)**

Hispanics, Blacks and Bears for SAFE encounters and friendship. A plus for heavy cummers. I'm Latino, passionate. I won't disappoint you. **NL381 (5)**

Transgendering WM, 43, 5'7", 185#, ISO BM, 30+, for sincere, loving, long-term relationship. All serious replies will be answered! **Voice 52807 (5)**

True love, romance, passion, friendship, endless kissing and more. Nice looking Latino 27, 6', 150#. Expecting to find love with black, tall skinny guy, I'm not asking for much. Just someone real. Let's give it a chance. **NL391 (5)**

WOMEN

ISO = In Search Of

Don't get us wrong, we love our child... But are u tired of entertaining your kids? Guess what? We are too... Wanted: sisters with

children for picnics, ball games and gettogethers. Please call us. We need friends who can relate. Signed, Stuck at Home with Kids **(312) 696-6784 (7)**

Sexy, passionate femme who is new to the life. ISO studs who are 24 and up who are willing to show me the ropes. I can be reached at **(773) 201-8389**. I will respond to all calls. **(5)**

GWF, 29, intelligent, honest, attractive fit, laid-back, eclectic tastes, ISO intelligent, attractive GW 28+ who demands honesty and integrity; values communication and intimacy and believes all relationship should foster happiness, sharing and growth. Let's enjoy life, each other, and have fun. **Voice52822 (6)**

Do you read books? Well, join us for refreshment and book discussions. Any book from Seuss to Warhol. Let's get literate. Race, age or gender unimportant, but female couples are a plus. Call **(312) 696-6784. (6)**

We are a female couple with a daughter. We are seeking other parents with children for social gatherings. Race not important. Call **(312) 696-6784 (6)**

Hey you! Yeah, I'm talk-

ing about you, sugar. If you're a loving Black "dark complexion" soft stud who is age 37-49, over 5'1", under 5'9", slim to medium build, independent, intelligent, single, drug, alcohol and disease free; let's talk. Oh, by the way, I'm an attractive, independent, intelligent, drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free, 5'1", 188#, slightly past 48 year old SBF. Why don't you beep me? **773 849-0915 (6)**

GHF single non-smoker, seeking special permanent relationship. Enjoy movies, dining out, dance, picnics, walks, quiet times, theatre, etc. etc. The affectionate and caring can write directly to **NL 216 (8/29)**

SBM 39 5'11" 200# seeks female Bi, clean, attractive, pretty feet. Race open, 20-50, 130 -600#. **Voice 52809 (6)**

Former punkette/artista, now 36, pernickety, routinized, lazy, anti-social, anti-consumerist crank (still kinda pretty) seeks empathetic perceiver: underlying logic/beauty residing biking distance/Lakeview. Physical preferences: fit, firm, no cat allergies. Curvaceousness A+. I'm 5'8", 151, buffed, vegetarian. Interests: arts,

bicycling, kayaking, moderate partying, health, consciousness. **Voice 52818 (6)**

Very attractive androgynous black lesbian ISO same for friendship and possibly more. Must be drug, alcohol, disease free, and single. Lt. smoker OK. Over 35, wt. proportioned to ht. Please no bi's, bi-curious or closet cases. Want to know more about me, give me a call. **Pager# (773) 226-1518 (5)**

Fun-loving, clean, cute, spiritual, non-smoking, open, employed, and oral woman ISO the same in a femme. No Bi's please. 35 or younger. To receive me as your blessing from above, please dial **(773) 226-9045**, press 2, leave your name and number and/or press 1 and leave your number. **(5)**

Mix & Match

Swinging couples, single @ bi-curious females. Still searching four couple for erotic fun, you can stop looking now. You've thought about it, so let's do it. Race open. Call for hot times. You will not be sorry e-mail **Bud225716aol.com (6)**

SANDERS from 28

else for four to six months and then get tested again and then we would do it. To my amazement, I said I would consider it. I love him and I thought this would be a way for us to share something with one another that I would never even consider sharing with anyone else. I also thought that I would learn what all the hype over unprotected sex was about. We took out time on a Saturday and went to get HIV tests. As I sat in the room getting my blood drawn, I knew this was crazy. I knew that I couldn't do this. As much as I loved him, and I was sure he loved me, this just didn't make sense.

I trusted him, and he trusted me, so what was stopping me? It was no longer the fear that had ensured my use of condoms before, it was something more. It was the reasoning behind the act. As much as we loved each other this was something that should be shared with a partner, if at all. I realized even the talk of having unprotected sex was a strong pull. When everyone around you tells you not to do it, it is the rebel in all of us that seems to push the desire. I still think it is irresponsible to make unsafe sex trendy. We have a responsibility to the younger generation. For adults it is a choice that we have to take of personal responsibility. If we choose to practice unsafe sex, then we can't expect others to be there to clean up the mess.

I wish I could say that I told my partner that I couldn't do it. I left it open for discussion in four months. So what is the message? I don't have one. I have just come to realize that the idea of unsafe sex is a strong draw. I still believe the idea of exchanging bodily fluids as a spiritual event is a load of crap. It's a draw that I understand, but I also know that if I make a mess, it's one I

have to live with for the rest of my life.

LYNNELL from 29

everything is as it is meant to be, anew. I'm not sure if I remember when the seasons changed last year. I remember being too busy for a walk on the lake, an ice cream cone or a bike ride. Just for today, I will remind myself to slow down and breathe. Nothing is more important than my own happiness. When I find life getting too stressful or people around

me demanding too much from me, I will simply drop out of the race. Boundaries are very important to me today. If there is something I can't or choose not to do, then so be it. I will not allow others to determine my fate. I'm not giving up; I'm giving in. Giving in to the will of a power greater than me. I'm realizing that being Transgendered or Intersex is only a small part of who I am. Yes, I am Intersex, I am proud of it and will never deny it. But I am also a woman, and

being a woman, to me, means being kind, gentle, loving, tolerant and patient with myself and others.

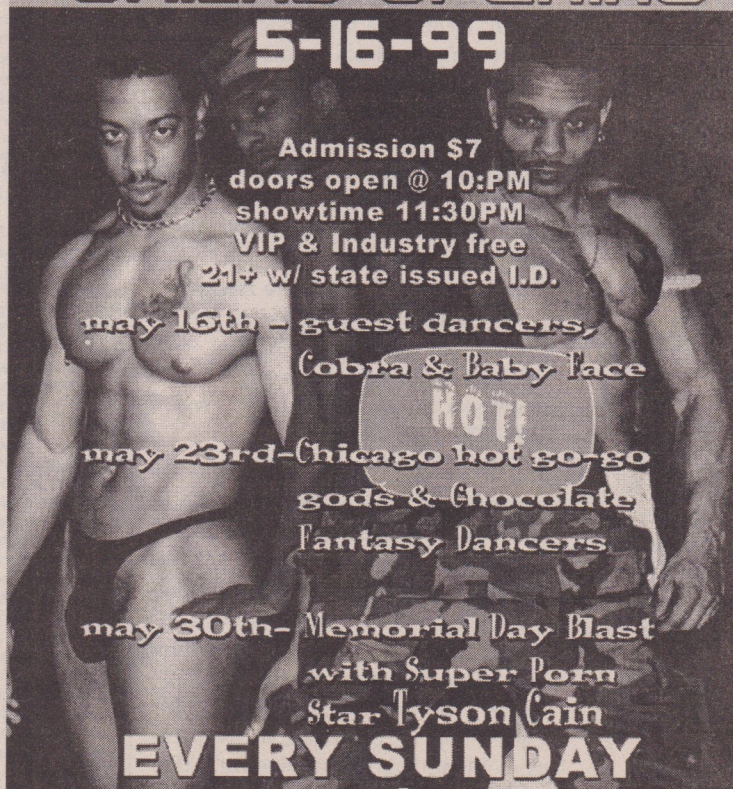
*Lynnell Stephani is a Trans/Intersex Activist.
members.aol.com/INTERSEXx. Or
email TSReporter@aol.com.*

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gods & Chocolate
Fantasy Dancers

may 30th - Memorial Day Blast
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star Tyson Cain

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World View: World Wide Web

by Andrew Davis

Hit List

Recently, the Chicago Police Department, criticized for limiting public access to its list of convicted sex offenders, decided to make that list available on the Internet. At the same time, Police Superintendent Terry Hillard announced a home-visitation program to ensure that offenders were truthful about their current residences.

The decision to make it easier for the public to view the names of registered sex offenders living in their neighborhoods came weeks after the issue was threatening to become a burden to Mayor Richard Daley. With the public able to view the information, it redefines the term "hit list." (A "hit" is registered any time someone visits a Web site.)

The move to make the list available also followed growing resentment between law enforcement and some Englewood residents. Englewood currently has more registered sex offenders than any other neighborhood and is still dealing with the aftermath of the Ryan Harris murder.

Hillard has said that the new program exceeded the guidelines of the state's sex-offender registration law which, in part, requires police agencies to make available to the public a printed list of the names and addresses of child molesters, rapists, and other offenders living nearby.

The Illinois Sex Offender Registration Act requires people convicted of sex crimes within the last 10 years to register with the police agency in their town and then re-register every year and every time they move. Violators can receive a jail sentence (from a week to a year) and a fine of at least \$500.

The Chicago Police Department sex-offender list may be accessed directly on the Net at <http://12.17.79.4> or at www.ci.chi.il.us/~communitypolicing

▼▼▼▼

INDEPENDENCE '99: CHICAGO BLACK PRIDE CELEBRATION

Chicago will host its first Black Pride Festival, "Independence '99," July 1-5. This weekend will be an annual gathering celebrating the Black Lesbian, Gay, Bi- affectionate and Transgender community in the Windy City. The theme is "Coming2GetherAs1." Independence '99 will feature activities for the entire Black LesBiGayTrans community including performances, cultural events, seminars and a picnic. Evening activities include parties by various social groups and bars/clubs.

The official host hotel is the Hyatt University Village, 625 S. Ashland. Reservations can be made at 312-243-7200 or Toll Free at 800-233-1234, ask for the Chocolate City rate. The Pride Committee Info desk will be at the hotel. The weekend activities at the hotel kick off with cultural performances July 1, followed by the Opening Reception and Kickoff Party Friday, July 2, continuing July 3 with seminars on topics ranging from spiri-

tuality, sexuality, personal finance, health/wellness, a media reception, relationships, politics for men, women and youth. One of the highlights of the weekend will be the Independence '99 Festival Picnic on Lake Michigan (Wellington Clock Tower at Irving Park Road & North Lake Shore Drive) on Sunday, July 4 with food, entertainment, recreation, music and dancing for all. All official events are free. Bus Tours are already planned from D.C. and Detroit. Call 773-288-2078; chicagoblackpride@yahoo.com or www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Café/2381/.

Hotter Than July! 1999 event

Many have come and gone, but KICK MAGAZINE has stood the test of time. Founded in 1994 by publisher Curtis Lipscomb, KICK has established itself as a mainstay in the gay community. The Detroit-based publication will take time out during this year's 4th-annual Hotter Than July!, Detroit's Gay Pride Celebration, to commemorate the occasion of their five-year anniversary. The celebration will kick off July 23.

E-mail KickPuCo@aol.com

F.Y.I. Resources

Predominantly Black Gay Clubs

CLUB ESCAPE, M,W,D,1530 E. 75th St.773-667-6454
CLUB INTA'S 308 W. Erie, Girls Night Thurs312-664-6595
CLUB INTIMUS (only Sat. 9p-3a)
312 W. Randolph, W,D,V312-901-1703
GENERATOR 306 N.Halsted, D, MW312-243-8889
JEFFERY PUB 7041 S. Jeffrey, MW, D, 4773-363-8555
CLUBHOUSE AT CONVENT MW,D,
1529 Armitage, MONDAYS 11p-4a773-395-8660
K.C. Productions at Cotton Club, Sundays312-341-9787
1710 S. Michigan, open til 4 a.m., shows
THE RAILS AT PROP HOUSE, 1675 N. Elston, FRIDAYS
MW,D, TheRails@aol.com708-802-1705
THE VIX: A Jazz Supperclub, 2814 N. Halsted
MW,D,R,GS773-529-3999

OTHER Clubs OF INTEREST

BERLIN 954 Belmont, MW, V, 4, S773-348-4975
BIG CHICKS 5024 N. Sheridan,S/G,WM,11a-2a/3a Sa773-728-5511
BUDDIES' REST/BAR 3301 Clark, MW, R773-477-4066
CHICAGO EAGLE, M,L, 5015 N. Clark773-728-0050
CLUB INTA'S 308 W. Erie, Women Thurs., Men Sun.312-664-6595
CIRCUIT 3641 N. Halsted, Salsa, etc.773-325-2233
FUSION 3631 N. Halsted, MW, V, D, E, 4773-975-6622
GIRLBAR, 2625 N. Halsted, W,D773-871-4210
LITTLE JIM'S 3501 N. Halsted, M, 4773-871-6116
MAN'S COUNTRY 5017 N. Clark, M, B773-878-2069
MOUNTAIN MOVING COFFEEHOUSE312-409-0276
ROSCOE'S 3354-6 N. Halsted, MW, D, V, E, Cafe773-281-3355
SIDETRACK 3349 N. Halsted, M, V773-477-9189
SPIN, Halsted & Belmont, MW, D773-327-7711
TEMPTATIONS 10235 W. Grand, Franklin Park, W, D,V, E, 4,
(5a Fri/Sat)847-455-0008

Resources

AA/Newtown Alano Club773-529-0321
Active Proud Black Lesbians and Gays773-493-3848
Adodi African-American men312-458-9584
Affinity, creating a South Side community center
P.O. Box 496002, Chicago, IL 60649312-409-7609
African American Womyn's Alliance
P.O. Box 198573, Chgo 60619-8573773-731-0279
A Real Read—African-American Lesbian/Gay/Trans Performers
www.uic.edu/orgs/arealread312-409-2457
BLACKLINES, Lambda Pub/OUTLINES
1115 W. Belmont, #2-D, 60657 (FAX773-871-7609) 773-871-7610
outlines@suba.com <http://www.suba.com/~outlines/>
Brother 2 Brother Chicago BRO2BROCHI@aol.com
P.O. Box 496024, Chicago 60649
BROTHERS C.A.N. (Community Awareness Network)
Programming773-752-7867
Brothers United Together HIV+ men/Afric Descent...773-752-7867
Chicago Black Lesbians & Gays,
P.O. Box 14811, Chicago, IL 60614-1181312-409-4917
Lakeside Pride Freedom Band773-434-6099
Church of the Open Door FAX (773) 778-0178, 773-778-3030
Black lesbigay/trans/heterosexual Church, 5954 S. Albany
The Committee, 2300 N. Clybourn, #32, 60614 773-235-0295
GAMBA: Discussion for men of African Descent...773-752-7867
Greater Chicago Committee, P.O. Box 146642, 60614-6642
Healthline 312-661-9153, prevent.773-674-0429 312-670-9660
Harambe Jahard Suburban Afric.-Amer. Bi/GayMen 708-445-2584
Horizons Community Services773-929-HELP
Howard Brown Health Center773-388-1600
Imani Umoja, Chicago Afric.-Amer Bi/Gay men...773-907-8993
Last House on the Block G&L in recovery773-373-0024
Lesbian Community Cancer Project773-561-4662
Les Femmes Amies312-232-0787
Men of All Colors Together/Chicago,PO Box
408922, 60640-8922312-409-6916
Minority Outreach Intervention Proj, FAX 312-986-0928
1255 S. Wabash, Suite 2-S, 60605312-986-0661
National Black L&G Leadership Forum202-483-6786
Onyx/Chicago leather/men, 1340 Irving, #188, 60613
PAC Social Club, South Side for mature lesbians
of African Descent, PACSOCIALC@aol.com
Phrasorty parties for all lesbians and gays312-409-6637
Roseland Community Hospital773-995-6469
Stop AIDS/African American Program
1718 E. 75th St., 60649773-752-7867
Test Positive Aware/Brothers United in Support...773-404-8726
Toussaint Brothers of Illinois847-625-7263
TransGenesis trans support312-839-5541
United Faith Affinitas, Black L/G/Bi, 1448 E. 53rd 773-878-7839

THE LITTLE THINGS

by Dailyn Wilson

I love my woman 'cause her beautiful hair is long ...
or short

It's the way she elegantly throws it back
or how she respectfully wears her hat

I love my woman 'cause the way she says *I love you*
or the way she shows it
"I love you baby" or when she gently rubs my feet
That's the way we grow, that's how she loves me

I love my woman 'cause she holds me close even
When she don't want none
And it's the little things like that
that make me want to give her some

I love my woman 'cause when I'm feeling down
She gives me words of encouragement
"Baby you can do anything you wanna do"
she tells
me and that's what helps me make it
through

I love my woman 'cause when she walks
by,
Looking so sexy, and knows I'm watching,
she'll put
in the extra switch and booty shake for me
Because she knows though I hate to see
her go,
I love to watch her leave

I love my woman 'cause when I f*** up royally and
sincerely didn't mean it
I don't run the risk of losing her
because she loves me unconditionally
She's gonna stand by me

I love my woman 'cause when we go out to eat
She doesn't mind sharing her food with me
We dip from the same sauce and eat from the same
tender piece of meat

I love my woman 'cause when we're making
passionate love
The sounds of ecstasy she makes with me
indicates to me that I'm doin' it her way
Doin' the right things to make her scream and show
me how very much she appreciates

All the things my woman does makes up
what we share
The love we share, those little things help put it there
The little things are why we're able to say
Lovely things at the end of a rainbow day.

Metra

Written about a beautiful woman that
sat across from me on the Metra

by Donnyea Stokes

Brown hair long and flowing
Eyes of almond
but filled with anger and attitude
Crows' feet between her eyes
Jagged nails
Breathing hard
Sitting across from me
Wondering what passes through her mind
What stops her time
What is she wondering of
Making a hard decision
Lips are covered in petroleum jelly
The shine is never ending
Strawberry cheeks ride along her cheekbones



'Meta' by Juarez Hawkins

However, the sex appeal in her
Legs never stop.
Crossed to perfection
She stands to sit by me
My mind wonders
Closing my eyes I can feel her heart
Echoing through my body.
Losing myself in her
As her fur brushes against my leg
My body feels connected to her every move.
Street signs pass
And so do our eyes
Locking into intense wonder
And so do our lips
Our imagination begins to stray

Away from constant reality
Imagination which only had us in mind
As I felt her delicate lips touch mine
She put her hand on my breast and I began to
squeeze my legs
feeling my moist insides.
I had come to realize that
I'd visited love for the first time in my imagination

INVISIBILITY

by Donnyea Stokes

Surrounds my mind
Stops the hands of time
Invisibility wraps its arms around me
The only thing I can see
Which divides me
The only thing that drowns me
To see it would be to see me
That's why I stay a mystery
To know why I stop and stare
To know my evil glare
I wish someone else could stop
And see why this invisibility takes over me.

Latex condoms with water-based lubricants help stop the spread of STD
(Sexually Transmitted Diseases) including HIV, the virus that causes AIDS

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Together!*

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STATE OF ILLINOIS AIDS HIV & STD HOTLINE. TDD: 1-800-782-0423
CITY OF CHICAGO, RICHARD M. DALEY, MAYOR